MARVEL
THE UNCANNY
X-MEN
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ROMITA JR

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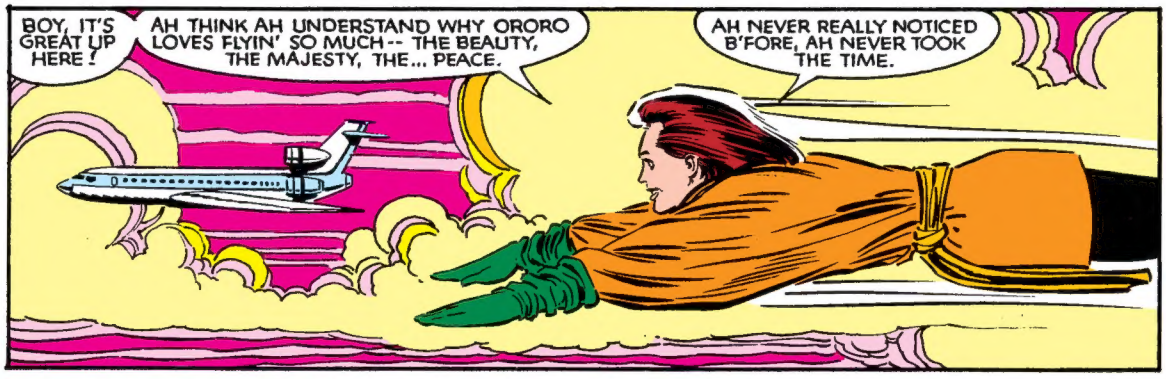
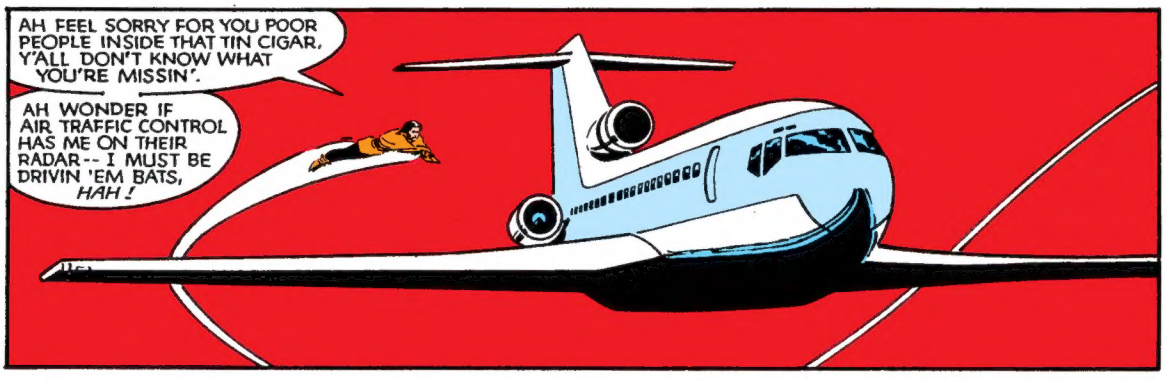
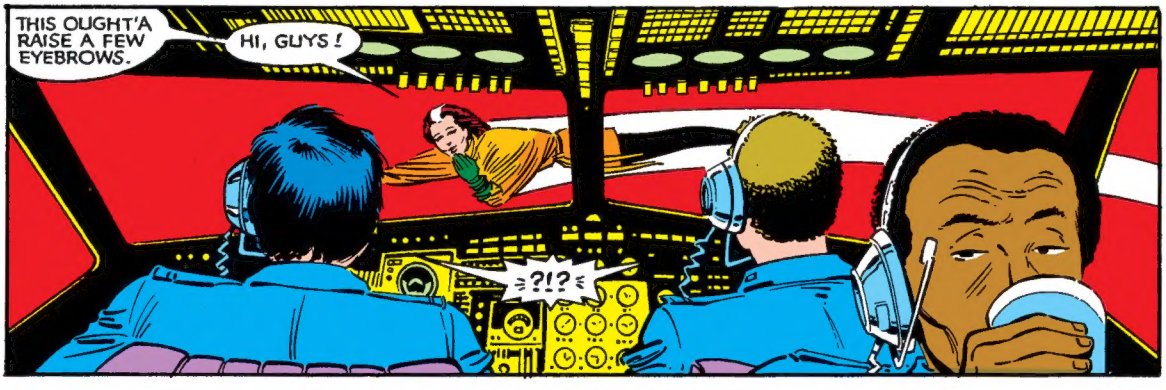
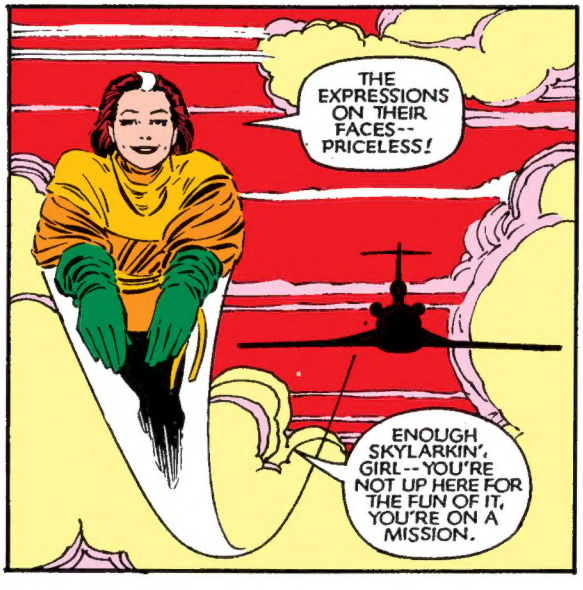
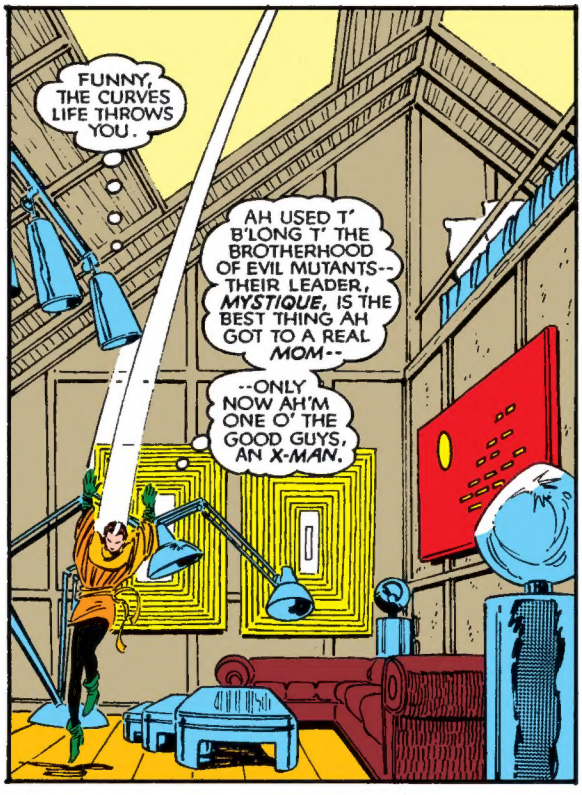

BOY, IT'S GREAT UP HERE!
AH THINK AH UNDERSTAND WHY ORORO LOVES FLYIN' SO MUCH-- THE BEAUTY, THE MAJESTY, THE... PEACE.
AH NEVER REALLY NOTICED B'FORE, AH NEVER TOOK THE TIME.


AH FEEL SORRY FOR YOU POOR PEOPLE INSIDE THAT TIN CIGAR, Y'ALL DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE MISSIN'.
AH WONDER IF AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL HAS ME ON THEIR RADAR-- I MUST BE DRIVIN 'EM BATS, HAH!

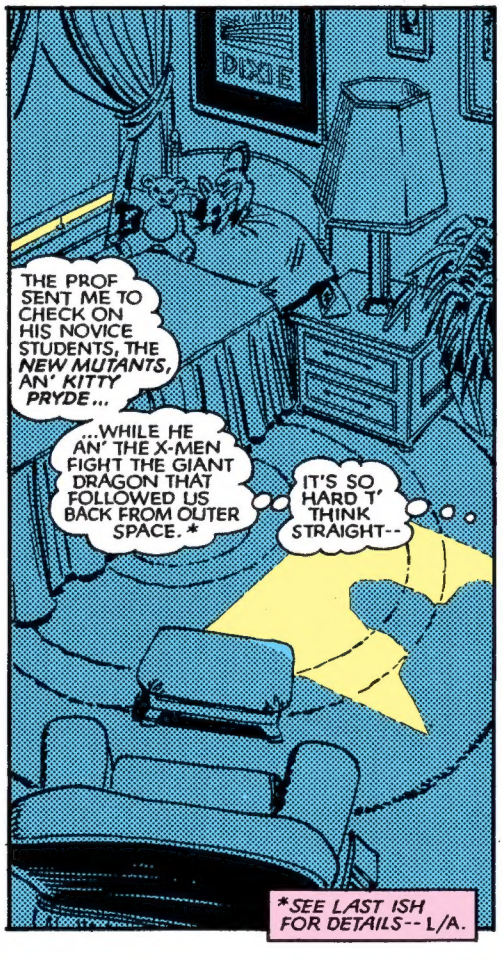

THIS OUGHT'A RAISE A FEW EYEBROWS.
HI, GUYS!
?!?

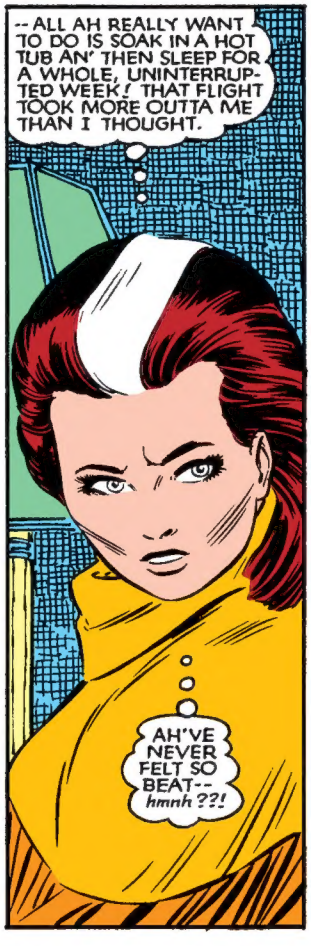

THE EXPRESSIONS ON THEIR FACES-- PRICELESS!
ENOUGH SKYLARKIN', GIRL--YOU'RE NOT UP HERE FOR THE FUN OF IT, YOU'RE ON A MISSION.

HOME SWEET HOME-- AN' IN RECORD TIME, TOO!
AH DIDN'T KNOW AH HAD THAT KIND'A SPEED IN ME.
AH ALSO NEVER DREAMED AH'D CALL PROFESSOR CHARLES XAVIER'S SCHOOL FOR GIFTED YOUNG-STERS "HOME!"

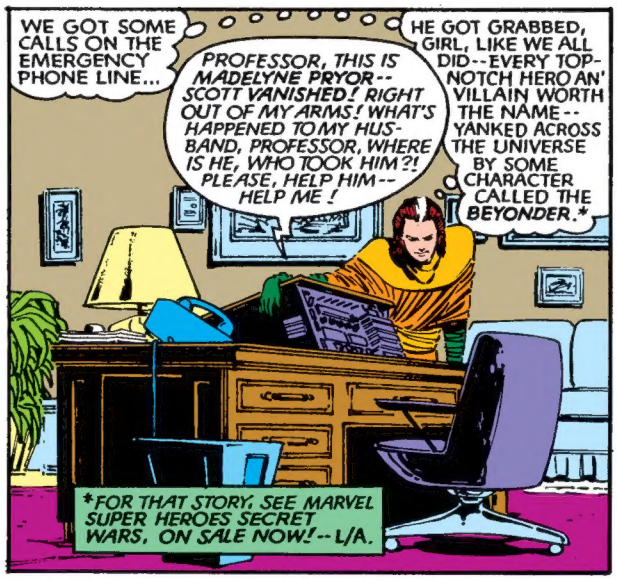

FUNNY, THE CURVES LIFE THROWS YOU.
AH USED T' B'LONG T' THE BROTHERHOOD OF EVIL MUTANTS-- THEIR LEADER, MYSTIQUE, IS THE BEST THING AH GOT TO A REAL MOM--
--ONLY NOW AH'M ONE O' THE GOOD GUYS, AN X-MAN.

WISH AH DIDN'T LIKE IT SO MUCH.
SOONER OR LATER, I'M GONNA HAVETA CHOOSE: M'FAMILY OR M'FRIENDS.
PLACE IS AWFUL QUIET, AH GUESS NOBODY'S HOME.

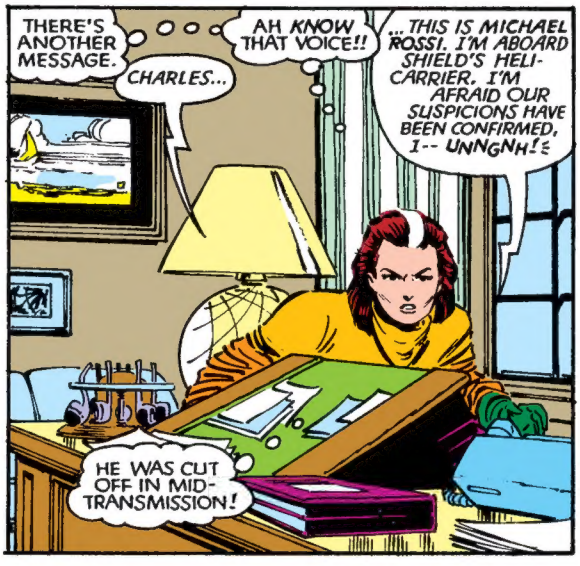

THE PROF SENT ME TO CHECK ON HIS NOVICE STUDENTS, THE NEW MUTANTS, AN' KITTY PRYDE...
...WHILE HE AN' THE X-MEN FIGHT THE GIANT DRAGON THAT FOLLOWED US BACK FROM OUTER SPACE.*
IT'S SO HARD T' THINK STRAIGHT--
*SEE LAST ISH FOR DETAILS-- L/A.

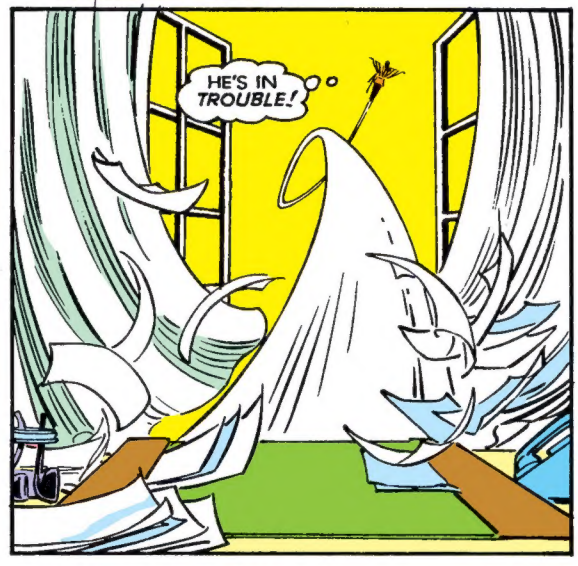

-- ALL AH REALLY WANT TO DO IS SOAK IN A HOT TUB AN' THEN SLEEP FOR A WHOLE, UNINTERRUPTED WEEK! THAT FLIGHT TOOK MORE OUTTA ME THAN I THOUGHT.
AH'VE NEVER FELT SO BEAT-- hmnh ??!

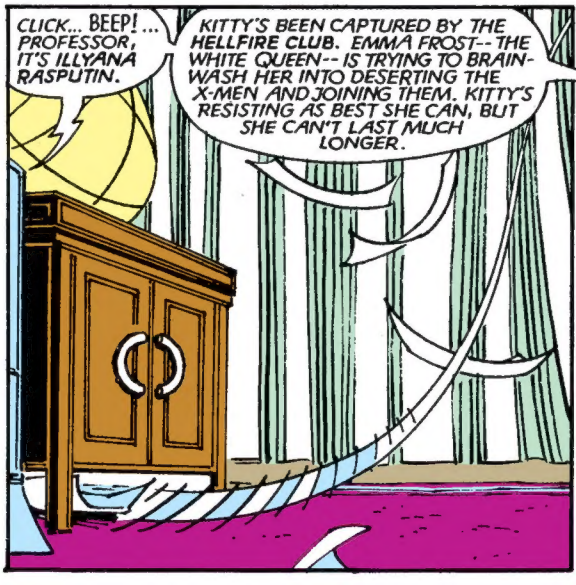
AH MUST BE RUNNIN' ON EMPTY, THE ALARM'S BEEN RINGIN' EVER SINCE AH CAME IN, BUT AH ONLY JUST REALIZED IT!
IT'S COMIN' FROM XAVIER'S STUDY!

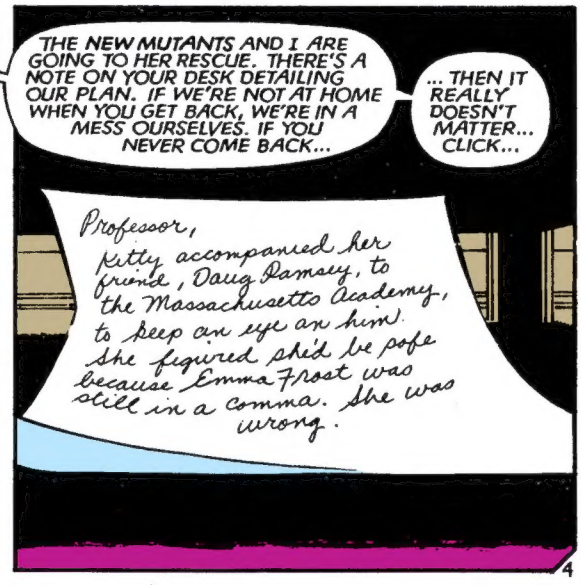

WE GOT SOME CALLS ON THE EMERGENCY PHONE LINE...
PROFESSOR, THIS IS MADELYNE PRYOR-- SCOTT VANISHED! RIGHT OUT OF MY ARMS! WHAT'S HAPPENED TO MY HUSBAND, PROFESSOR, WHERE IS HE, WHO TOOK HIM?! PLEASE, HELP HIM-- HELP ME!
HE GOT GRABBED, GIRL, LIKE WE ALL DID--EVERY TOP-NOTCH HERO AN' VILLAIN WORTH THE NAME-- YANKED ACROSS THE UNIVERSE BY SOME CHARACTER CALLED THE BEYONDER.*
*FOR THAT STORY, SEE MARVEL SUPER HEROES SECRET WARS, ON SALE NOW!--L/A.

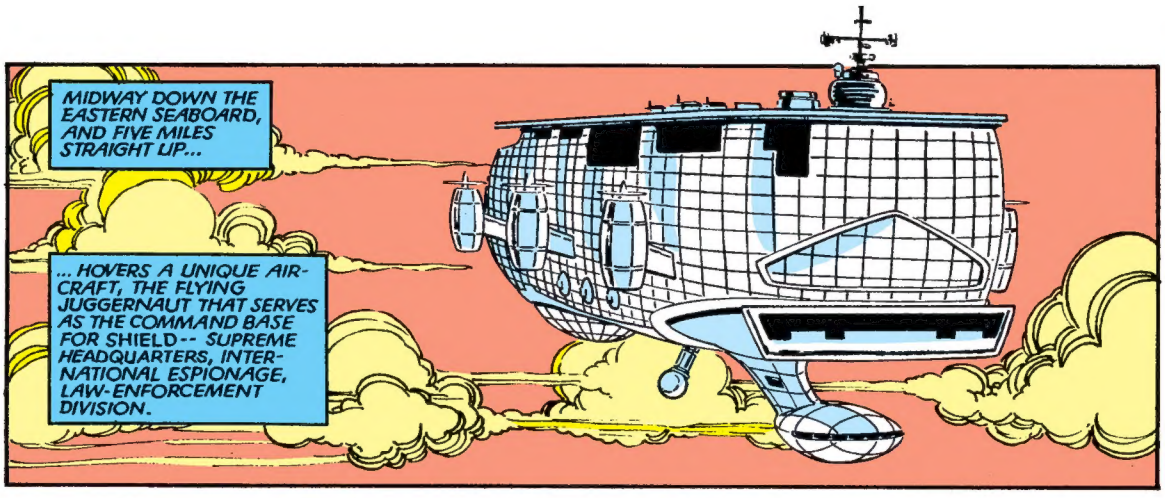
BUT IF ALL WENT WELL, CYCLOPS SHOULD'A BEEN RETURNED TO YOU, SAFE AN' SOUND. *
'COURSE, WE WERE SUPPOSED TO LAND IN NEW YORK, NOT TOKYO-- AN' NO ONE SAID ANYTHING ABOUT TOSSIN' IN THAT DUMB DRAGON.
*LAST ISH--L/A.

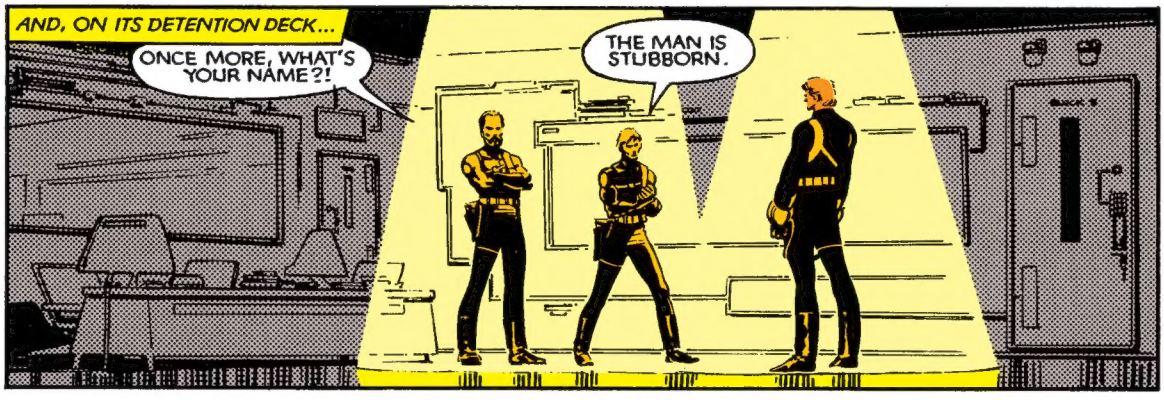

THERE'S ANOTHER MESSAGE.
CHARLES...
AH KNOW THAT VOICE!!
...THIS IS MICHAEL ROSSI. I'M ABOARD SHIELD'S HELI-CARRIER. I'M AFRAID OUR SUSPICIONS HAVE BEEN CONFIRMED, I-- UNNGNH!
HE WAS CUT OFF IN MID-TRANSMISSION!


HE'S IN TROUBLE!

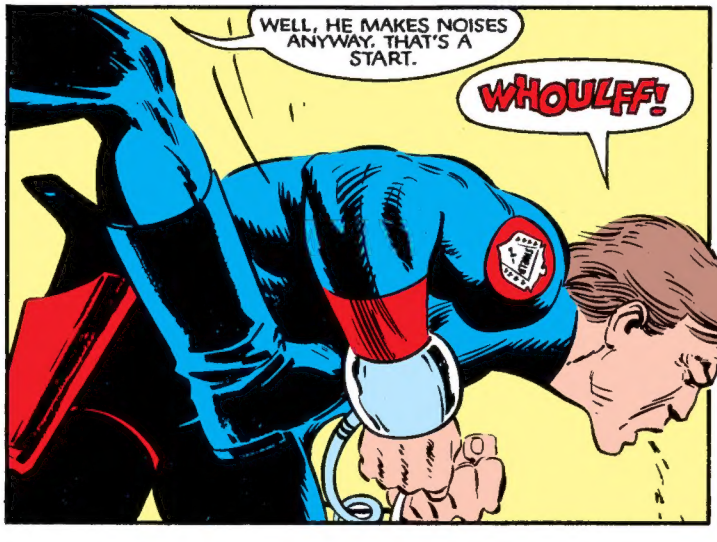

CLICK... BEEP! ... PROFESSOR, IT'S ILLYANA RASPUTIN.
KITTY'S BEEN CAPTURED BY THE HELLFIRE CLUB. EMMA FROST-- THE WHITE QUEEN-- IS TRYING TO BRAIN-WASH HER INTO DESERTING THE X-MEN AND JOINING THEM. KITTY'S RESISTING AS BEST SHE CAN, BUT SHE CAN'T LAST MUCH LONGER.


THE NEW MUTANTS AND I ARE GOING TO HER RESCUE. THERE'S A NOTE ON YOUR DESK DETAILING OUR PLAN. IF WE'RE NOT AT HOME WHEN YOU GET BACK, WE'RE IN A MESS OURSELVES. IF YOU NEVER COME BACK...
... THEN IT REALLY DOESN'T MATTER... CLICK...
Professor,
Kitty accompanied her friend, Doug Ramsey, to the Massachusetts Academy, to keep an eye on him. She figured she'd be safe because Emma Frost was still in a comma. She was wrong.

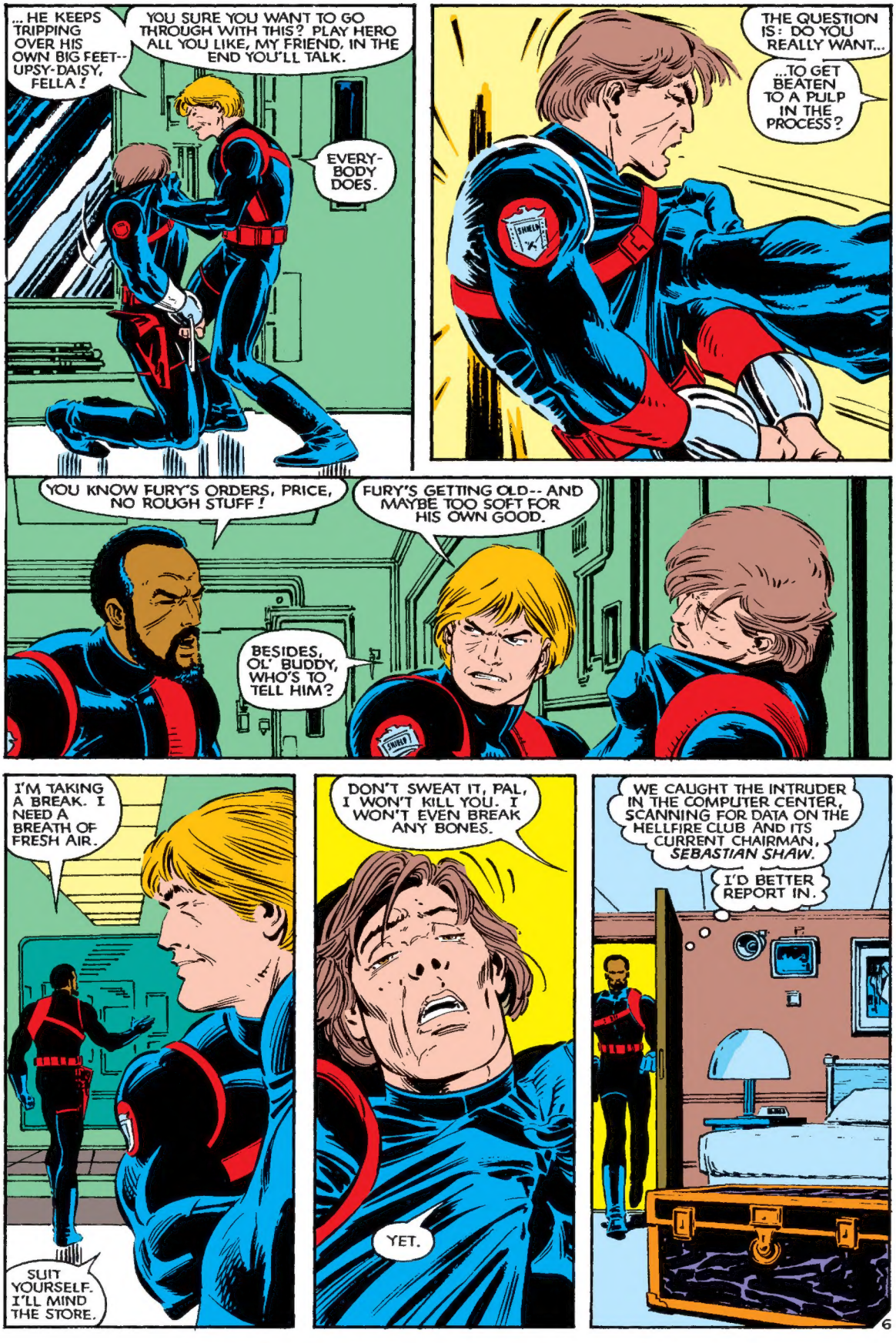

MIDWAY DOWN THE EASTERN SEABOARD, AND FIVE MILES STRAIGHT UP...
... HOVERS A UNIQUE AIRCRAFT, THE FLYING JUGGERNAUT THAT SERVES AS THE COMMAND BASE FOR SHIELD -- SUPREME HEADQUARTERS, INTERNATIONAL ESPIONAGE, LAW-ENFORCEMENT DIVISION.

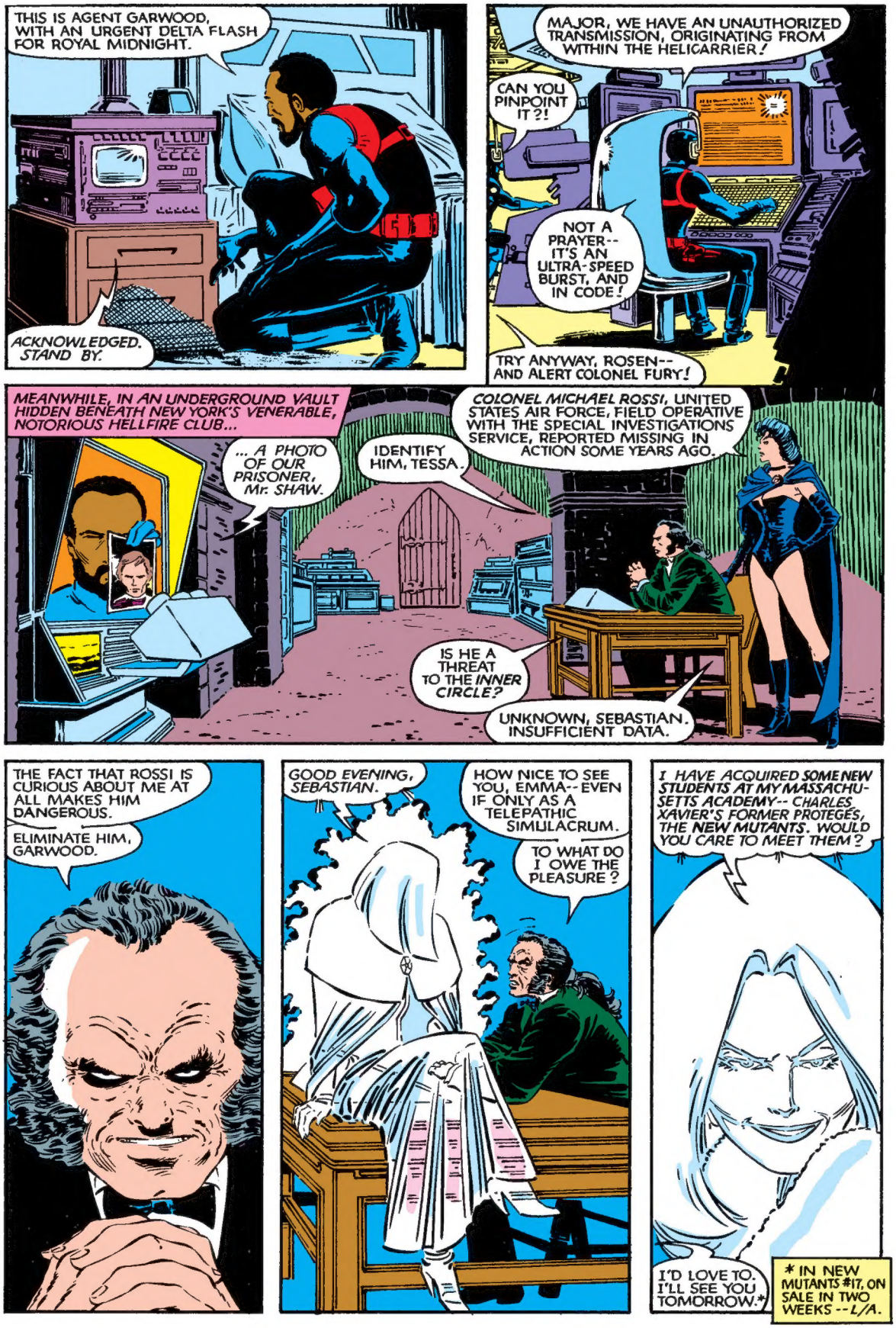

AND, ON ITS DETENTION DECK...
ONCE MORE, WHAT'S YOUR NAME?!
THE MAN IS STUBBORN.

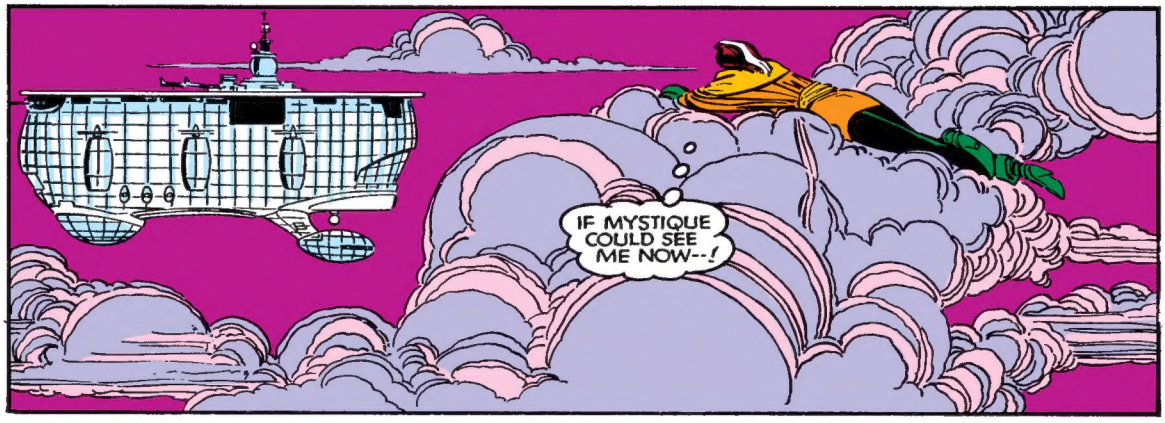
WE'VE BEEN AT THIS FOR DAYS AND HE HASN'T SAID A WORD. HEY, PAUL, YOU THINK HE'S MUTE?
QUARRGH!!

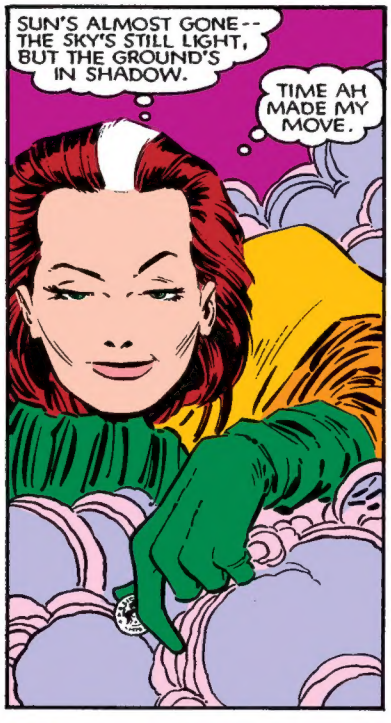

WELL, HE MAKES NOISES ANYWAY. THAT'S A START.
WHOULFF!

CUT IT OUT, PRICE!
WHAT'D I DO, PARTNER?! IT'S NOT MY FAULT IF THE PRISONER'S SO CLUMSY...

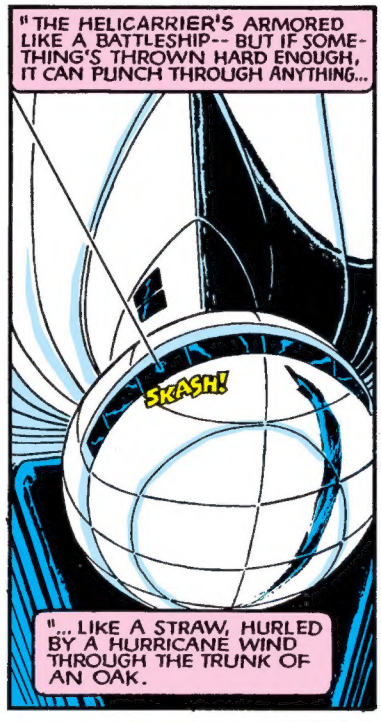

... HE KEEPS TRIPPING OVER HIS OWN BIG FEET-- UPSY-DAISY, FELLA!
YOU SURE YOU WANT TO GO THROUGH WITH THIS? PLAY HERO ALL YOU LIKE, MY FRIEND, IN THE END YOU'LL TALK.
EVERY-BODY DOES.
THE QUESTION IS: DO YOU REALLY WANT...
...TO GET BEATEN TO A PULP IN THE PROCESS?
YOU KNOW FURY'S ORDERS, PRICE, NO ROUGH STUFF!
FURY'S GETTING OLD-- AND MAYBE TOO SOFT FOR HIS OWN GOOD.
BESIDES, OL' BUDDY, WHO'S TO TELL HIM?
I'M TAKING A BREAK. I NEED A BREATH OF FRESH AIR.
SUIT YOURSELF. I'LL MIND THE STORE.
DON'T SWEAT IT, PAL, I WON'T KILL YOU. I WON'T EVEN BREAK ANY BONES.
YET.
WE CAUGHT THE INTRUDER IN THE COMPUTER CENTER, SCANNING FOR DATA ON THE HELLFIRE CLUB AND ITS CURRENT CHAIRMAN, SEBASTIAN SHAW.
I'D BETTER REPORT IN.

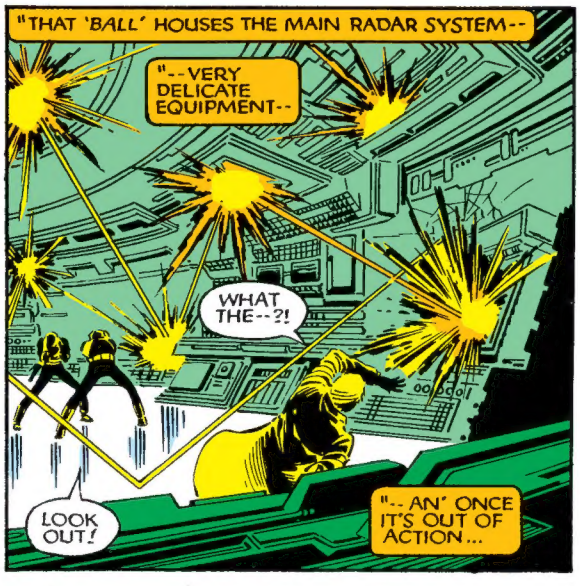

THIS IS AGENT GARWOOD, WITH AN URGENT DELTA FLASH FOR ROYAL MIDNIGHT.
ACKNOWLEDGED. STAND BY.
MAJOR, WE HAVE AN UNAUTHORIZED TRANSMISSION, ORIGINATING FROM WITHIN THE HELICARRIER!
CAN YOU PINPOINT IT?!
NOT A PRAYER-- IT'S AN ULTRA-SPEED BURST, AND IN CODE!
TRY ANYWAY, ROSEN-- AND ALERT COLONEL FURY!
MEANWHILE, IN AN UNDERGROUND VAULT HIDDEN BENEATH NEW YORK'S VENERABLE, NOTORIOUS HELLFIRE CLUB...
... A PHOTO OF OUR PRISONER, Mr. SHAW.
IDENTIFY HIM, TESSA.
COLONEL MICHAEL ROSSI, UNITED STATES AIR FORCE, FIELD OPERATIVE WITH THE SPECIAL INVESTIGATIONS SERVICE, REPORTED MISSING IN ACTION SOME YEARS AGO.
IS HE A THREAT TO THE INNER CIRCLE?
UNKNOWN, SEBASTIAN. INSUFFICIENT DATA.
THE FACT THAT ROSSI IS CURIOUS ABOUT ME AT ALL MAKES HIM DANGEROUS.
ELIMINATE HIM, GARWOOD.
GOOD EVENING, SEBASTIAN.
HOW NICE TO SEE YOU, EMMA-- EVEN IF ONLY AS A TELEPATHIC SIMULACRUM.
TO WHAT DO I OWE THE PLEASURE?
I HAVE ACQUIRED SOME NEW STUDENTS AT MY MASSACHUSETTS ACADEMY-- CHARLES XAVIER'S FORMER PROTEGÉS, THE NEW MUTANTS. WOULD YOU CARE TO MEET THEM?
I'D LOVE TO. I'LL SEE YOU TOMORROW.*
* IN NEW MUTANTS #17, ON SALE IN TWO WEEKS -- L/A.


IF MYSTIQUE COULD SEE ME NOW--!

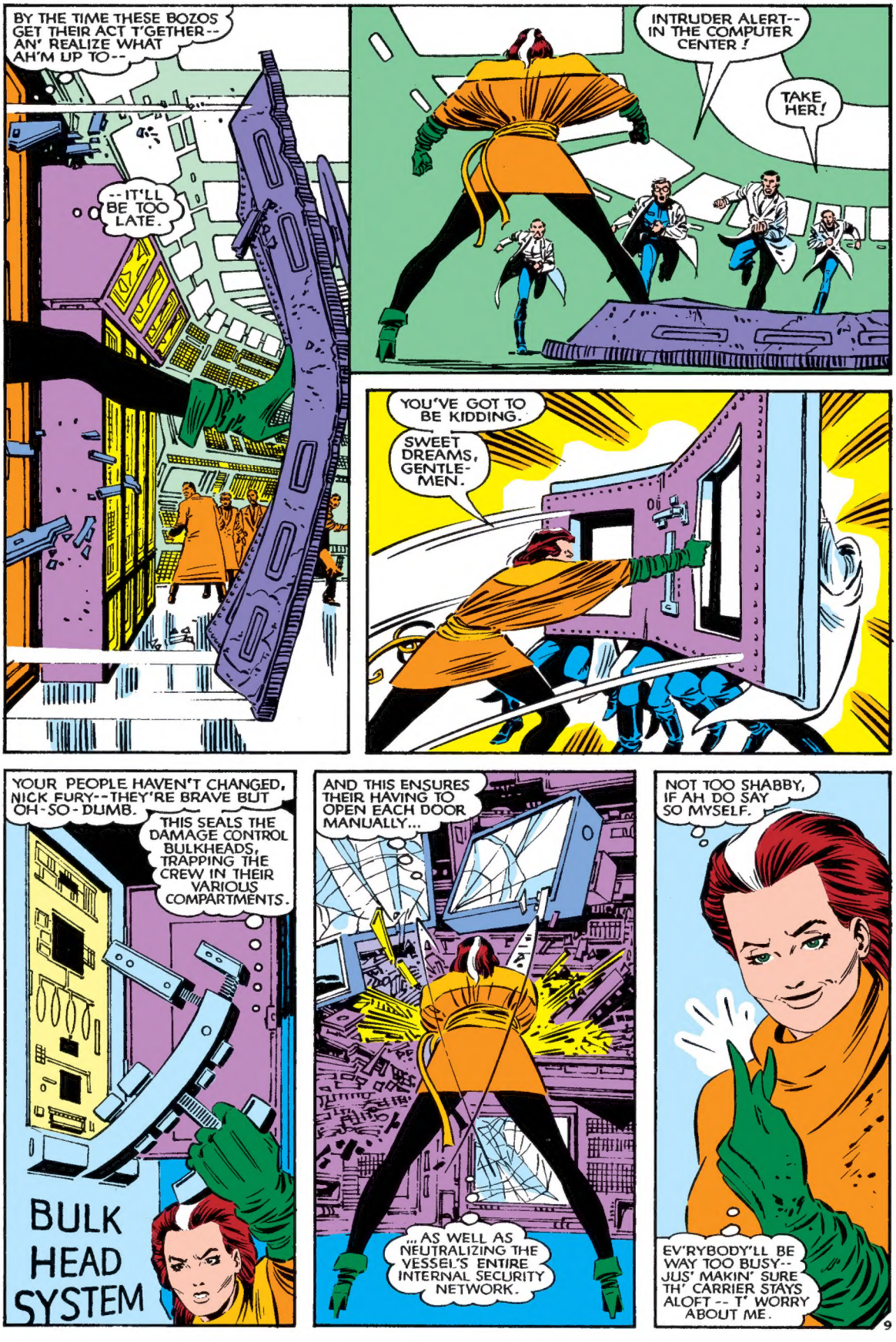

SUN'S ALMOST GONE-- THE SKY'S STILL LIGHT, BUT THE GROUND'S IN SHADOW.
TIME AH MADE MY MOVE.

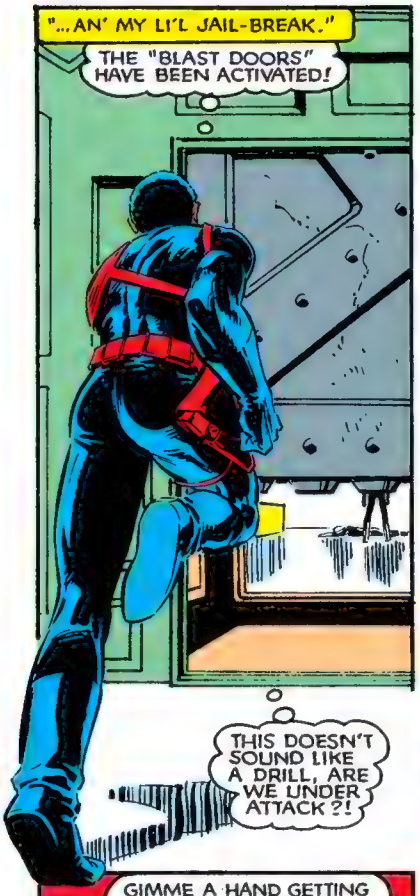
"SUZY B"-- DO YOUR STUFF!


"THE HELICARRIER'S ARMORED LIKE A BATTLESHIP-- BUT IF SOMETHING'S THROWN HARD ENOUGH, IT CAN PUNCH THROUGH ANYTHING...
SKASH!
"... LIKE A STRAW, HURLED BY A HURRICANE WIND THROUGH THE TRUNK OF AN OAK.

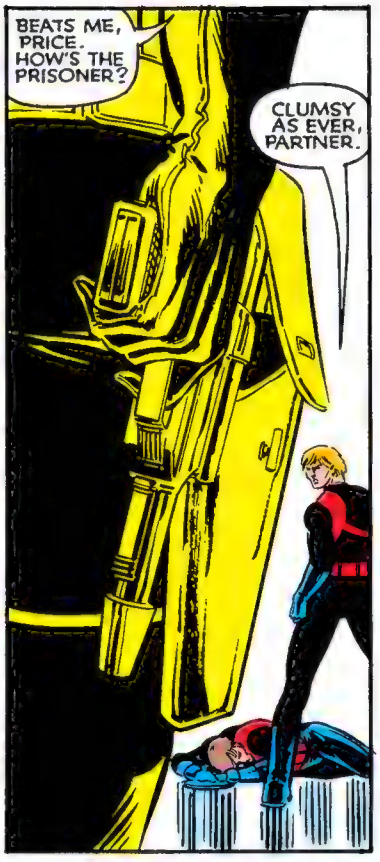

"THAT 'BALL' HOUSES THE MAIN RADAR SYSTEM--
"--VERY DELICATE EQUIPMENT--
WHAT THE--?!
LOOK OUT!
"-- AN' ONCE IT'S OUT OF ACTION...

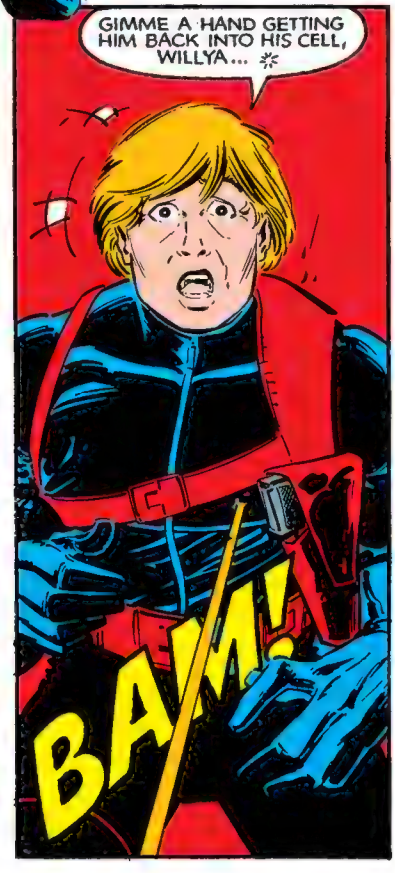
...THIS TUB'LL BE VIRTUALLY BLIND.
IN ALL THE CONFUSION, WHO'S THEN T' NOTICE ME SLIPPIN' ABOARD?

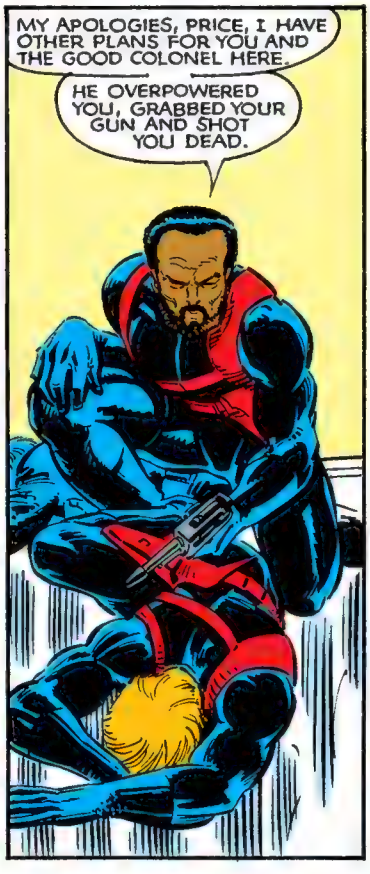

BY THE TIME THESE BOZOS GET THEIR ACT T'GETHER-- AN' REALIZE WHAT AH'M UP TO--
--IT'LL BE TOO LATE.
INTRUDER ALERT-- IN THE COMPUTER CENTER!
TAKE HER!
YOU'VE GOT TO BE KIDDING.
SWEET DREAMS, GENTLE-MEN.
YOUR PEOPLE HAVEN'T CHANGED, NICK FURY--THEY'RE BRAVE BUT OH-SO-DUMB.
THIS SEALS THE DAMAGE CONTROL BULKHEADS, TRAPPING THE CREW IN THEIR VARIOUS COMPARTMENTS.
BULK HEAD SYSTEM
AND THIS ENSURES THEIR HAVING TO OPEN EACH DOOR MANUALLY...
...AS WELL AS NEUTRALIZING THE VESSEL'S ENTIRE INTERNAL SECURITY NETWORK.
NOT TOO SHABBY, IF AH DO SAY SO MYSELF.
EV'RYBODY'LL BE WAY TOO BUSY-- JUS' MAKIN' SURE TH' CARRIER STAYS ALOFT -- T' WORRY ABOUT ME.

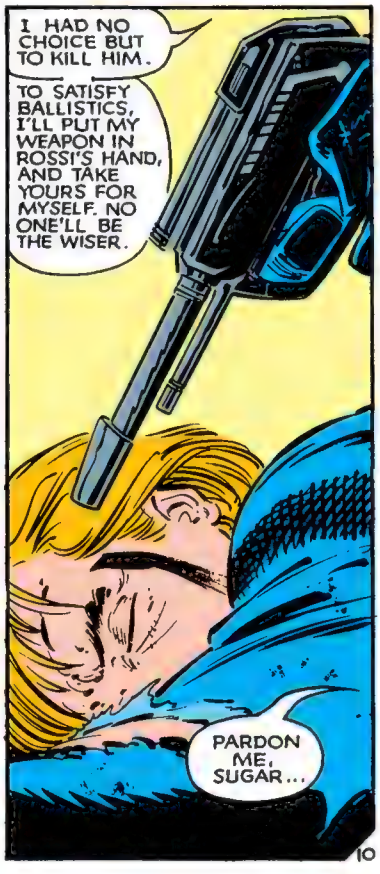

"...AN' MY LI'L JAIL-BREAK."
THE "BLAST DOORS" HAVE BEEN ACTIVATED!
THIS DOESN'T SOUND LIKE A DRILL, ARE WE UNDER ATTACK?!

PERHAPS I CAN TURN THAT TO MY ADVANTAGE.
YO, PAUL-- WHAT'S THE STORY?! WHY THE ALARMS?!


BEATS ME, PRICE. HOW'S THE PRISONER?
CLUMSY AS EVER, PARTNER.

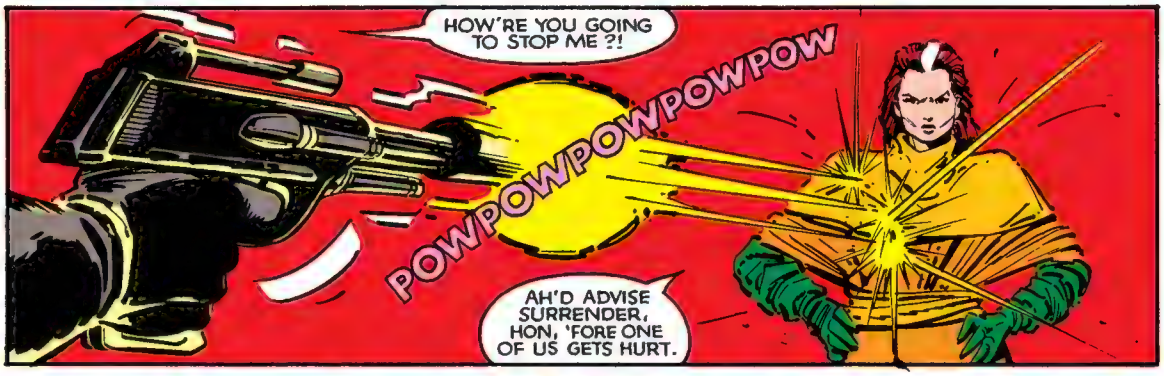

GIMME A HAND GETTING HIM BACK INTO HIS CELL, WILLYA...
BAM!

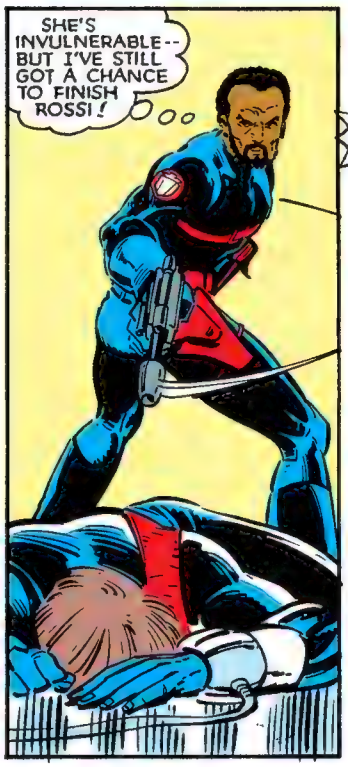

MY APOLOGIES, PRICE, I HAVE OTHER PLANS FOR YOU AND THE GOOD COLONEL HERE.
HE OVERPOWERED YOU, GRABBED YOUR GUN AND SHOT YOU DEAD.

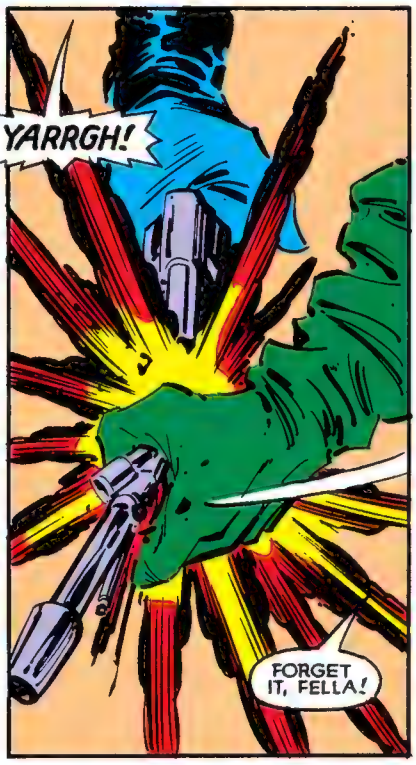

I HAD NO CHOICE BUT TO KILL HIM.
TO SATISFY BALLISTICS, I'LL PUT MY WEAPON IN ROSSI'S HAND, AND TAKE YOURS FOR MYSELF. NO ONE'LL BE THE WISER.
PARDON ME, SUGAR...

WHAT--?! WHO?!?
...OHGOLLYGEE, AM AH INTERRUPTING?
SORRY ABOUT THAT.

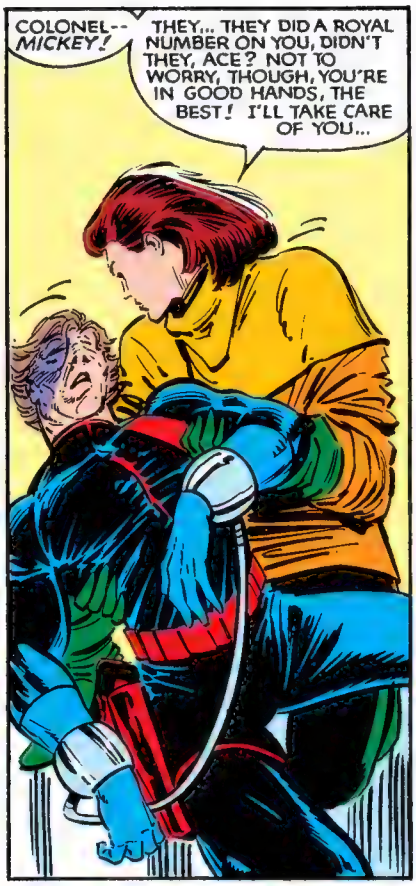
Y'SEE, COLONEL ROSSI'S A FRIEND O' MINE.
AH'M AFRAID AH REALLY CAN'T LET YOU SHOOT HIM.

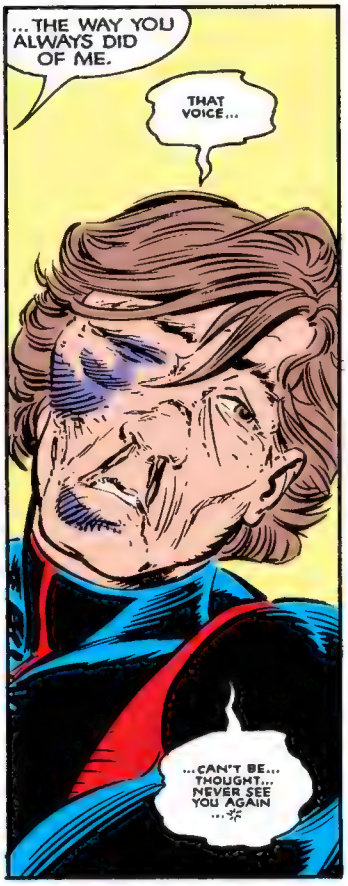

HOW'RE YOU GOING TO STOP ME?!
POWPOWPOWPOWPOW
AH'D ADVISE SURRENDER, HON, 'FORE ONE OF US GETS HURT.


SHE'S INVULNERABLE-- BUT I'VE STILL GOT A CHANCE TO FINISH ROSSI!

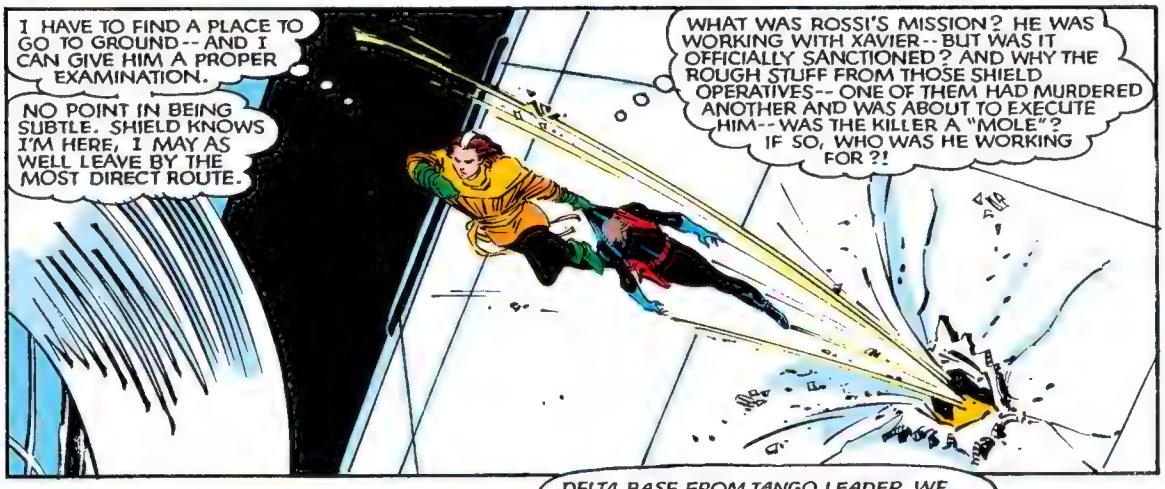

YARRGH!
FORGET IT, FELLA!

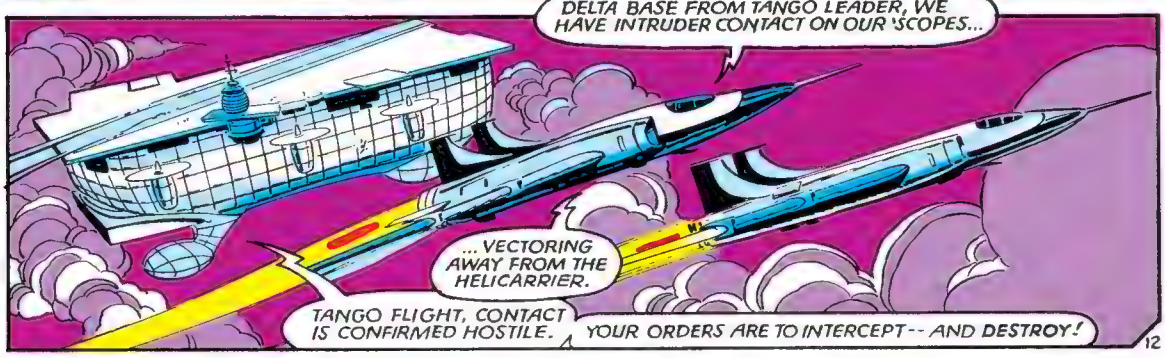
JUS' BE GRATEFUL MY PUNCH DOESN'T TAKE YOUR HEAD CLEAN OFF!
UNNNGNH!

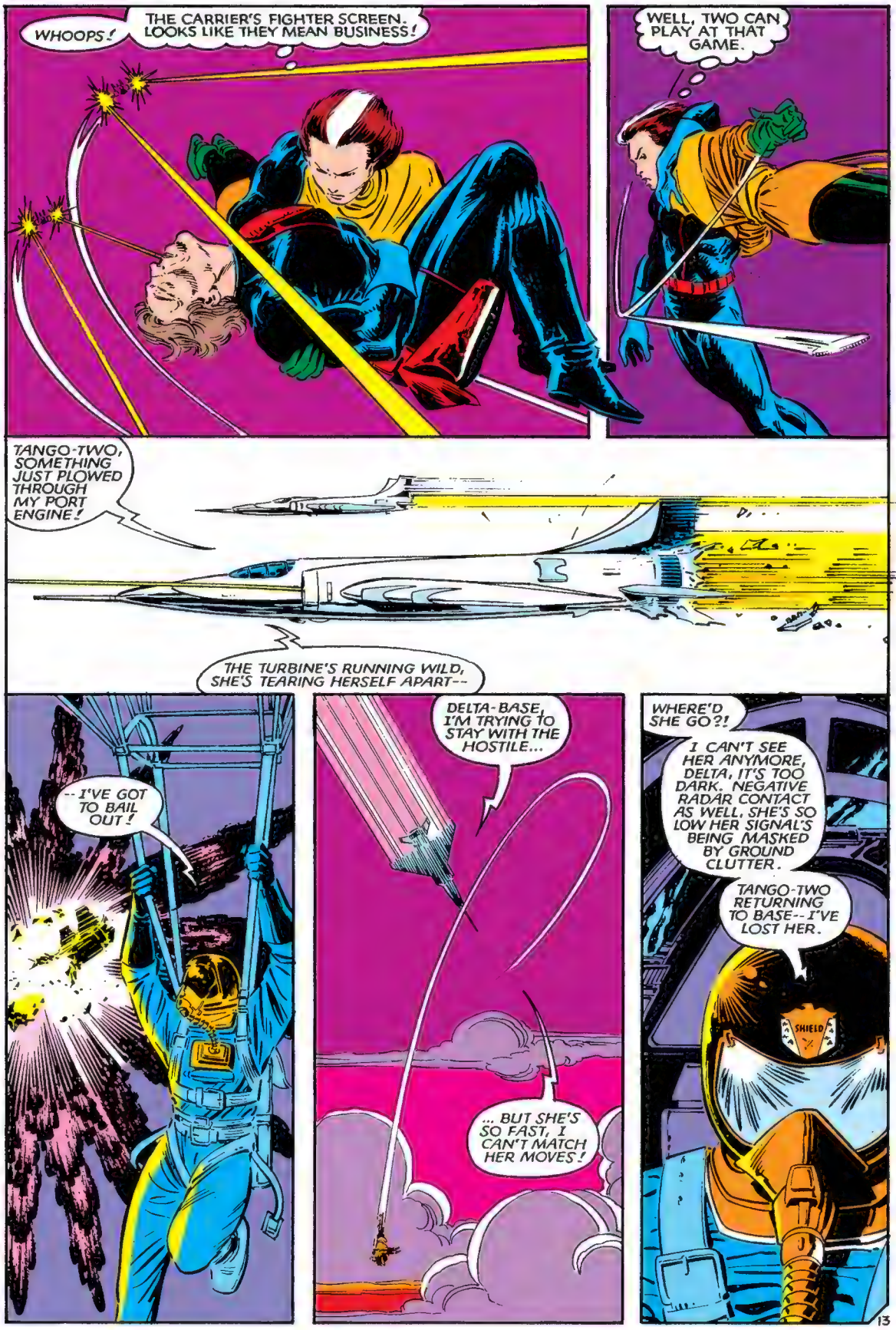

COLONEL-- MICKEY!
THEY... THEY DID A ROYAL NUMBER ON YOU, DIDN'T THEY, ACE? NOT TO WORRY, THOUGH, YOU'RE IN GOOD HANDS, THE BEST! I'LL TAKE CARE OF YOU...

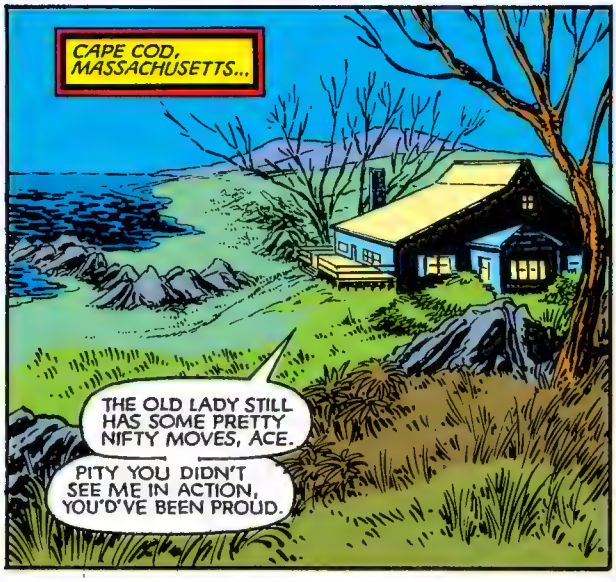

...THE WAY YOU ALWAYS DID OF ME.
THAT VOICE...
...CAN'T BE... THOUGHT... NEVER SEE YOU AGAIN ...

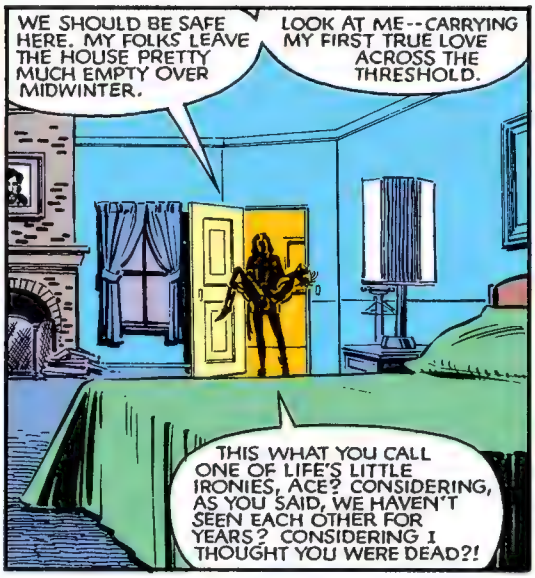
ME AND THE BAD PENNY, LOVER, FOREVER POPPING UP WHERE AND WHEN LEAST EXPECTED.
BLAST, HE'S UNCONSCIOUS.
HE MAY HAVE INTERNAL INJURIES.

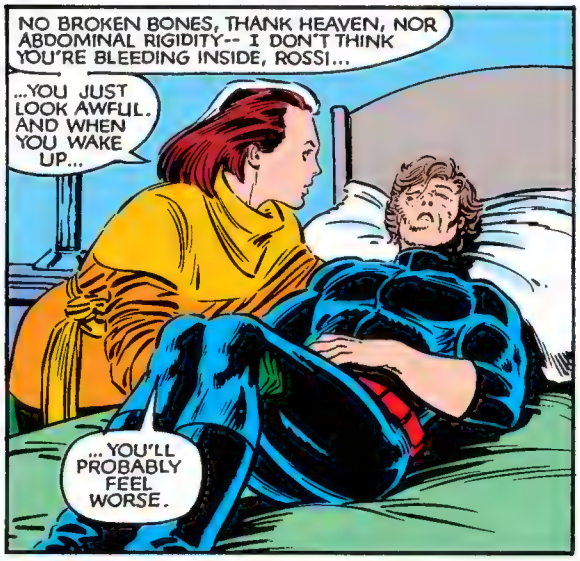

I HAVE TO FIND A PLACE TO GO TO GROUND-- AND I CAN GIVE HIM A PROPER EXAMINATION.
NO POINT IN BEING SUBTLE. SHIELD KNOWS I'M HERE, I MAY AS WELL LEAVE BY THE MOST DIRECT ROUTE.
WHAT WAS ROSSI'S MISSION? HE WAS WORKING WITH XAVIER-- BUT WAS IT OFFICIALLY SANCTIONED? AND WHY THE ROUGH STUFF FROM THOSE SHIELD OPERATIVES-- ONE OF THEM HAD MURDERED ANOTHER AND WAS ABOUT TO EXECUTE HIM-- WAS THE KILLER A "MOLE"? IF SO, WHO WAS HE WORKING FOR?!

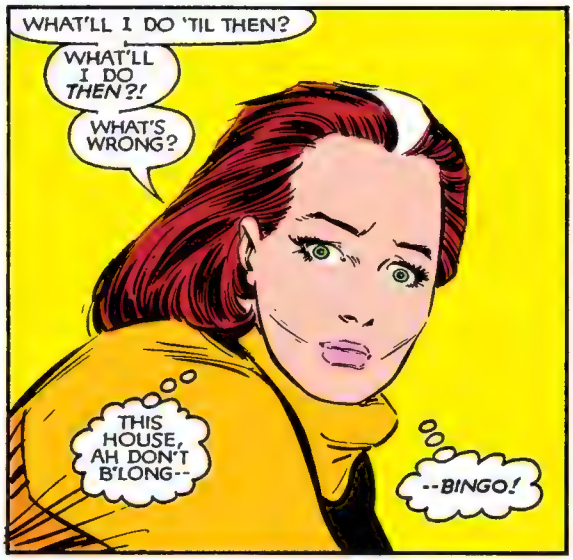

DELTA BASE FROM TANGO LEADER, WE HAVE INTRUDER CONTACT ON OUR 'SCOPES...
...VECTORING AWAY FROM THE HELICARRIER.
TANGO FLIGHT, CONTACT IS CONFIRMED HOSTILE.
YOUR ORDERS ARE TO INTERCEPT-- AND DESTROY!

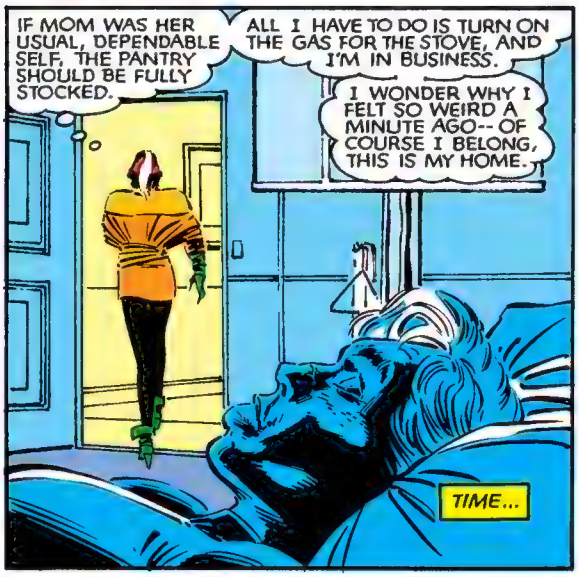

WHOOPS!
THE CARRIER'S FIGHTER SCREEN. LOOKS LIKE THEY MEAN BUSINESS!
WELL, TWO CAN PLAY AT THAT GAME.
TANGO-TWO, SOMETHING JUST PLOWED THROUGH MY PORT ENGINE!
THE TURBINE'S RUNNING WILD, SHE'S TEARING HERSELF APART--
--I'VE GOT TO BAIL OUT!
DELTA-BASE, I'M TRYING TO STAY WITH THE HOSTILE...
... BUT SHE'S SO FAST, I CAN'T MATCH HER MOVES!
WHERE'D SHE GO?!
I CAN'T SEE HER ANYMORE, DELTA, IT'S TOO DARK. NEGATIVE RADAR CONTACT AS WELL, SHE'S SO LOW HER SIGNAL'S BEING MASKED BY GROUND CLUTTER.
TANGO-TWO RETURNING TO BASE--I'VE LOST HER.
SHIELD


CAPE COD, MASSACHUSETTS...
THE OLD LADY STILL HAS SOME PRETTY NIFTY MOVES, ACE.
PITY YOU DIDN'T SEE ME IN ACTION, YOU'D'VE BEEN PROUD.

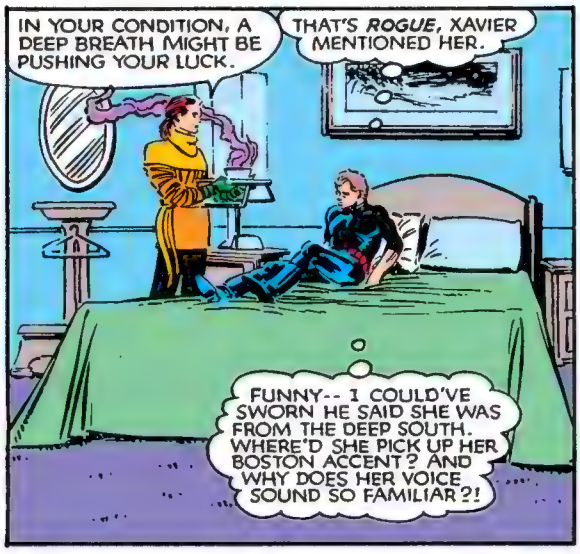

WE SHOULD BE SAFE HERE. MY FOLKS LEAVE THE HOUSE PRETTY MUCH EMPTY OVER MIDWINTER.
LOOK AT ME--CARRYING MY FIRST TRUE LOVE ACROSS THE THRESHOLD.
THIS WHAT YOU CALL ONE OF LIFE'S LITTLE IRONIES, ACE? CONSIDERING, AS YOU SAID, WE HAVEN'T SEEN EACH OTHER FOR YEARS? CONSIDERING I THOUGHT YOU WERE DEAD?!


NO BROKEN BONES, THANK HEAVEN, NOR ABDOMINAL RIGIDITY-- I DON'T THINK YOU'RE BLEEDING INSIDE, ROSSI...
...YOU JUST LOOK AWFUL. AND WHEN YOU WAKE UP...
...YOU'LL PROBABLY FEEL WORSE.

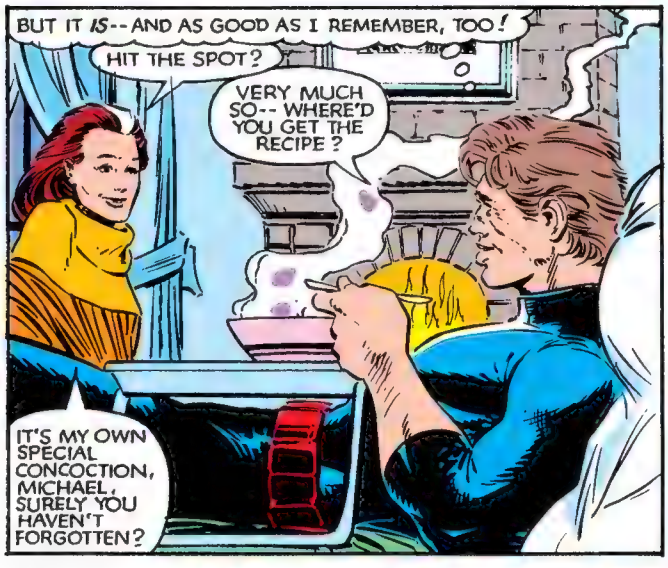

WHAT'LL I DO 'TIL THEN?
WHAT'LL I DO THEN?!
WHAT'S WRONG?
THIS HOUSE, AH DON'T B'LONG--
--BINGO!


IF MOM WAS HER USUAL, DEPENDABLE SELF, THE PANTRY SHOULD BE FULLY STOCKED.
ALL I HAVE TO DO IS TURN ON THE GAS FOR THE STOVE, AND I'M IN BUSINESS.
I WONDER WHY I FELT SO WEIRD A MINUTE AGO-- OF COURSE I BELONG, THIS IS MY HOME.
TIME...

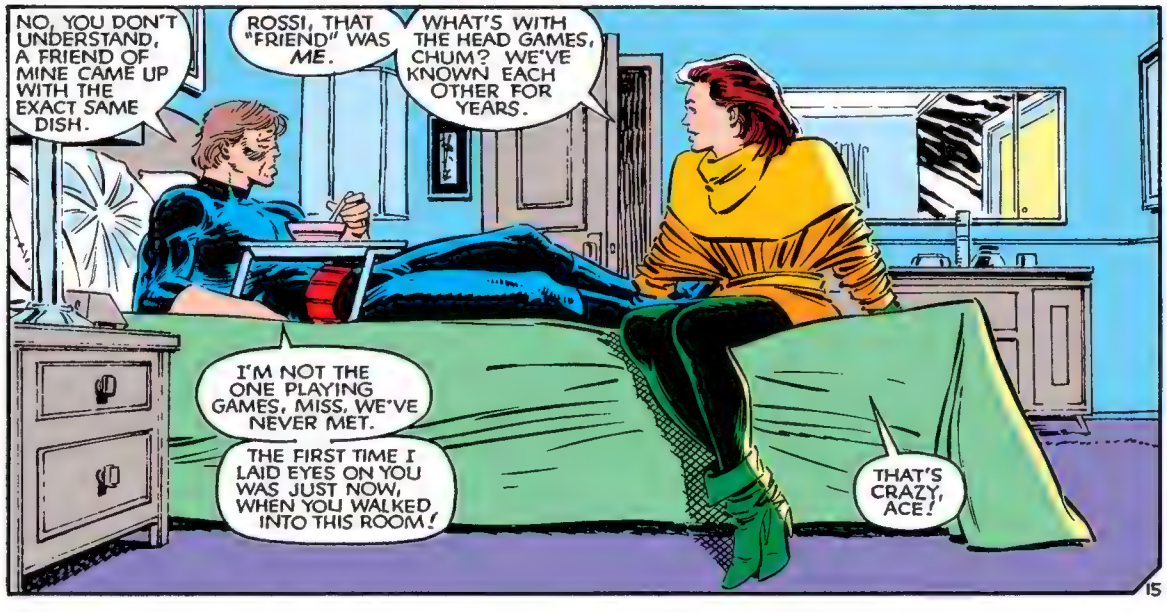
... PASSES.
Oohhh...
WHERE... AM I? NOT ABOARD... HELICARRIER: THAT'S CERTAIN.
AM I... STILL... PRISONER?
I WOULDN'T ADVISE MOVING, ACE.


IN YOUR CONDITION, A DEEP BREATH MIGHT BE PUSHING YOUR LUCK.
THAT'S ROGUE, XAVIER MENTIONED HER.
FUNNY-- I COULD'VE SWORN HE SAID SHE WAS FROM THE DEEP SOUTH. WHERE'D SHE PICK UP HER BOSTON ACCENT? AND WHY DOES HER VOICE SOUND SO FAMILIAR?!

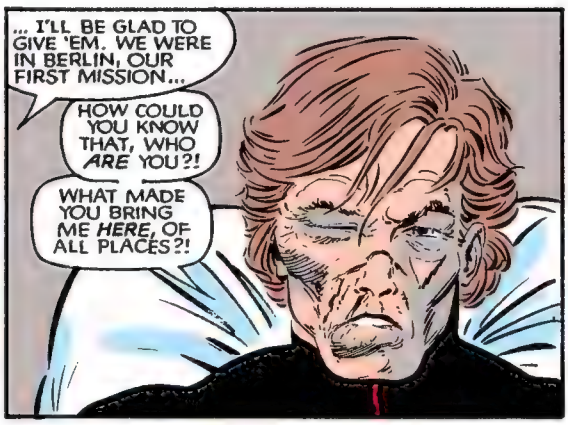
THANKS FOR THE RESCUE.
ANYTIME.
I ANTICIPATED YOU MIGHT BE HUNGRY...
I AM-- mmmmm-- THAT SMELLS DELICIOUS.
IT CAN'T BE--!

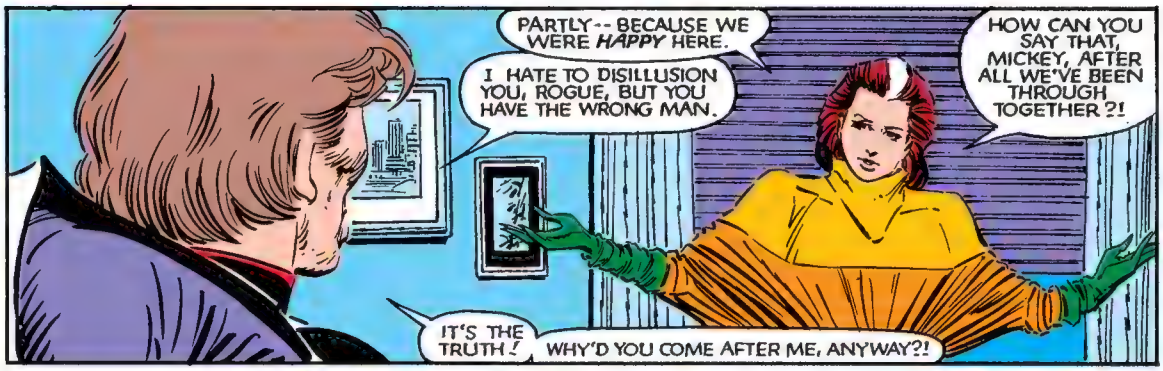

BUT IT IS--AND AS GOOD AS I REMEMBER, TOO!
HIT THE SPOT?
VERY MUCH SO-- WHERE'D YOU GET THE RECIPE?
IT'S MY OWN SPECIAL CONCOCTION, MICHAEL, SURELY YOU HAVEN'T FORGOTTEN?

WHAT?!? IS MY HEARING GOING-- OR MY MIND-- AM I HALLUCINATING?!
MY APOLOGIES, I THOUGHT THIS SOUP WAS UNIQUE.
IT IS. IT'S MINE.

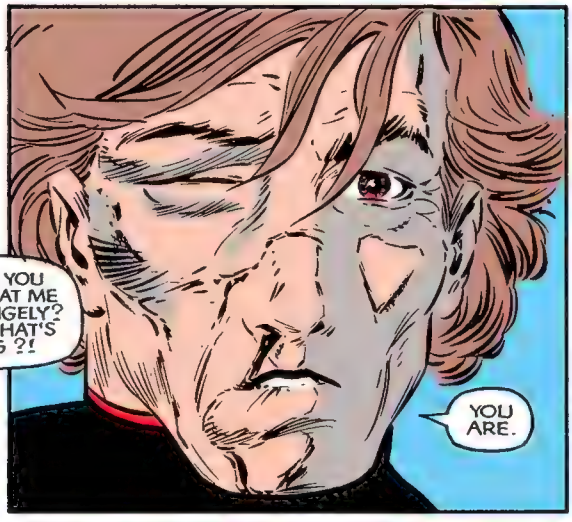

NO, YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND, A FRIEND OF MINE CAME UP WITH THE EXACT SAME DISH.
ROSSI, THAT "FRIEND" WAS ME.
WHAT'S WITH THE HEAD GAMES, CHUM? WE'VE KNOWN EACH OTHER FOR YEARS.
I'M NOT THE ONE PLAYING GAMES, MISS, WE'VE NEVER MET.
THE FIRST TIME I LAID EYES ON YOU WAS JUST NOW, WHEN YOU WALKED INTO THIS ROOM!
THAT'S CRAZY, ACE!

WHERE'D YOU LEARN THAT NICK-NAME?!
I GAVE IT TO YOU.
NO WAY!
I'VE SEEN STUBBORN MEN IN MY DAY, COLONEL-- BEGINNING WITH MY FATHER--! BUT IF YOU WANT DETAILS...

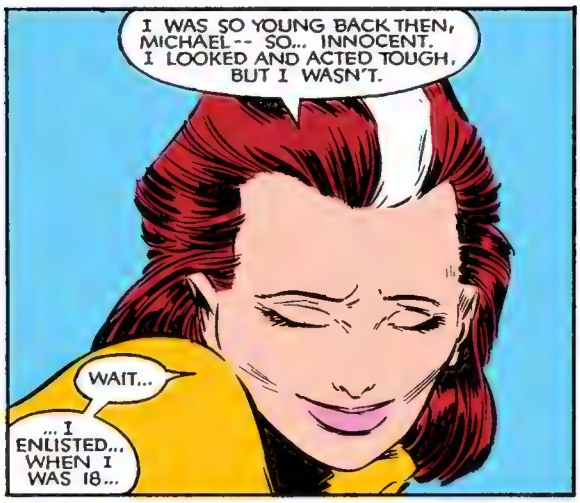

... I'LL BE GLAD TO GIVE 'EM. WE WERE IN BERLIN, OUR FIRST MISSION...
HOW COULD YOU KNOW THAT, WHO *ARE* YOU?!
WHAT MADE YOU BRING ME *HERE*, OF ALL PLACES?!

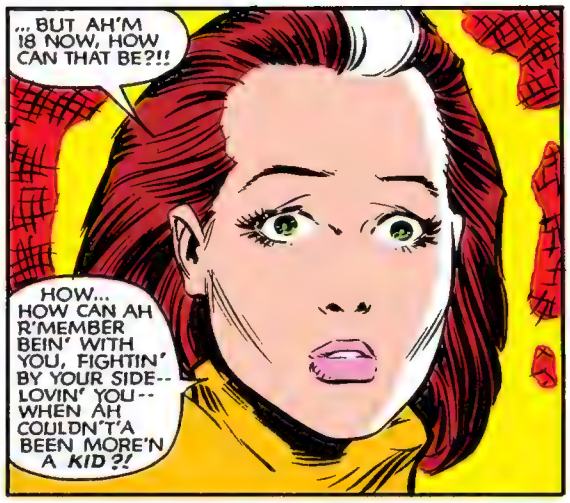

PARTLY-- BECAUSE WE WERE *HAPPY* HERE.
I HATE TO DISILLUSION YOU, ROGUE, BUT YOU HAVE THE WRONG MAN.
HOW CAN YOU SAY THAT, MICKEY, AFTER ALL WE'VE BEEN THROUGH TOGETHER?!
IT'S THE TRUTH!
WHY'D YOU COME AFTER ME, ANYWAY?!

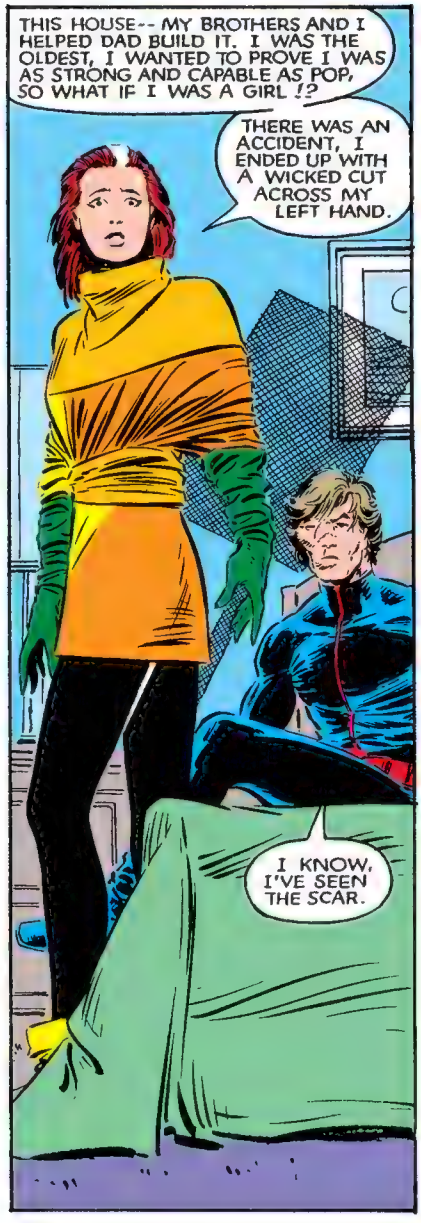
YOU CALLED, I ANSWERED.
REALLY, ROSSI, DO YOU THINK I'D EVER LEAVE YOU IN THE LURCH AFTER THE WAY YOU AND WOLVERINE DEFIED ORDERS TO BUST ME OUT OF LUBYANKA PRISON? THE KGB WOULD NEVER HAVE LET ME GO. I OWE YOU MY SANITY, ACE, AND PROBABLY MY LIFE...
WHY ARE YOU LOOKING AT ME SO STRANGELY? ROSSI, WHAT'S WRONG?!

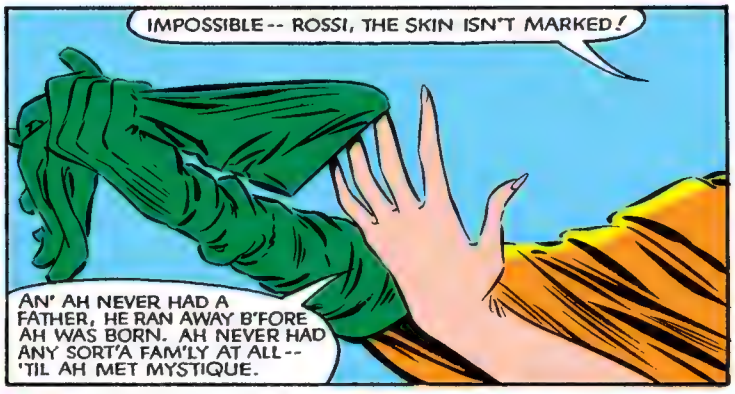

YOU ARE.

STOP IT, YOU'RE SCARING ME!
NO MORE SO THAN YOU ARE ME. WHEN WAS LUBYANKA?
EIGHT YEARS AGO.
AND WE FIRST MET...?
RIGHT AFTER I JOINED THE AIR FORCE.

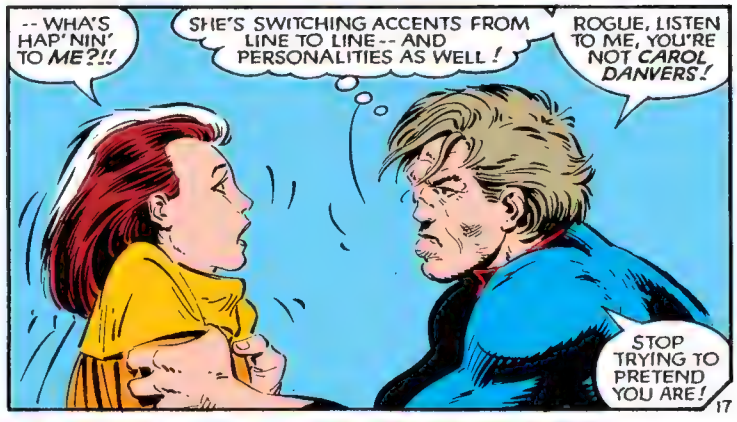

I WAS SO YOUNG BACK THEN, MICHAEL-- SO... INNOCENT. I LOOKED AND ACTED TOUGH, BUT I WASN'T.
WAIT...
... I ENLISTED... WHEN I WAS 18...

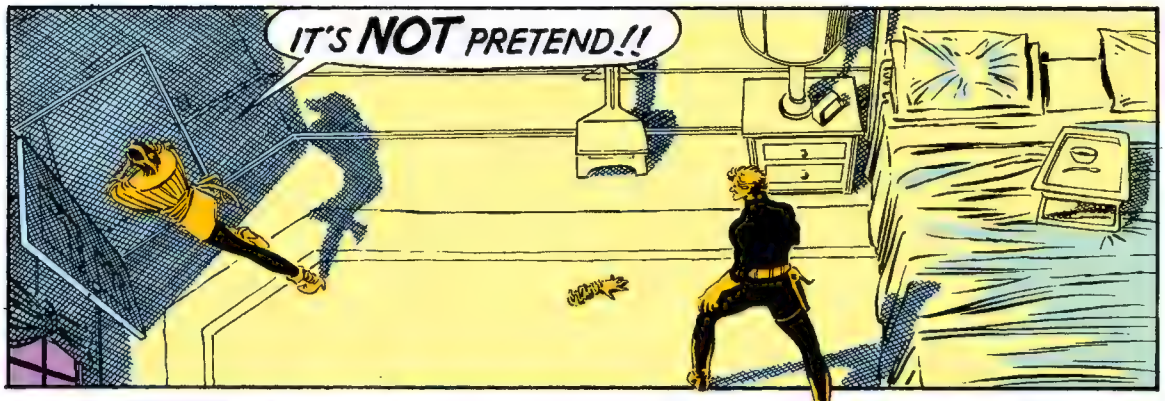

... BUT AH'M 18 NOW, HOW CAN THAT BE?!!
HOW... HOW CAN AH R'MEMBER BEIN' WITH YOU, FIGHTIN' BY YOUR SIDE-- LOVIN' YOU-- WHEN AH COULDN'T'A BEEN MORE'N A KID?!


THIS HOUSE-- MY BROTHERS AND I HELPED DAD BUILD IT. I WAS THE OLDEST, I WANTED TO PROVE I WAS AS STRONG AND CAPABLE AS POP, SO WHAT IF I WAS A GIRL!?
THERE WAS AN ACCIDENT, I ENDED UP WITH A WICKED CUT ACROSS MY LEFT HAND.
I KNOW, I'VE SEEN THE SCAR.


IMPOSSIBLE-- ROSSI, THE SKIN ISN'T MARKED!
AN' AH NEVER HAD A FATHER, HE RAN AWAY B'FORE AH WAS BORN. AH NEVER HAD ANY SORT'A FAM'LY AT ALL-- 'TIL AH MET MYSTIQUE.

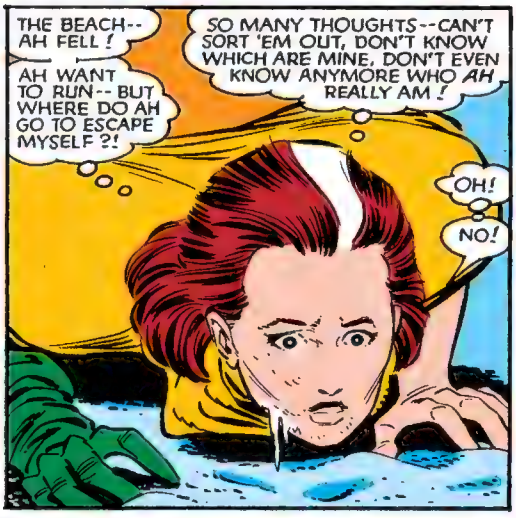
MY HAIR-- WHY'S IT SO SHORT?!
IT... IT SHOULD BE BLOND!
WHAT HAPPENED TO MY FACE--

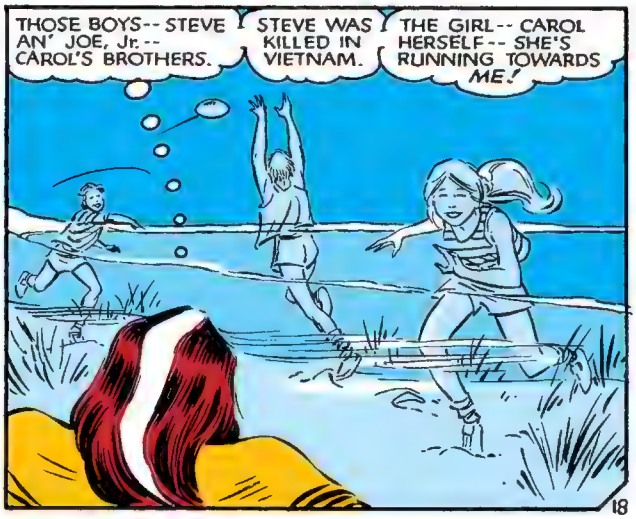

-- WHA'S HAP'NIN' TO ME?!!
SHE'S SWITCHING ACCENTS FROM LINE TO LINE-- AND PERSONALITIES AS WELL!
ROGUE, LISTEN TO ME, YOU'RE NOT CAROL DANVERS!
STOP TRYING TO PRETEND YOU ARE!

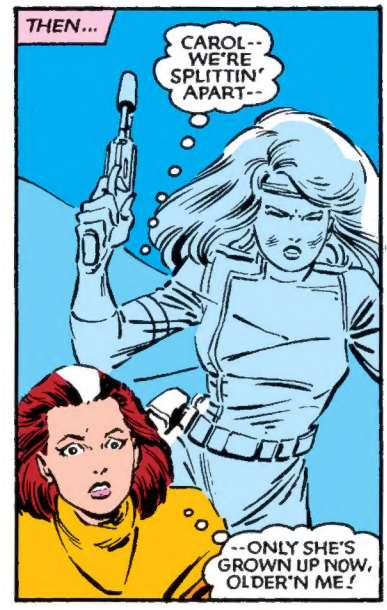

IT'S NOT PRETEND!!

MY FOOT--!

OHHH!?!
WHUMPFLF!


THE BEACH-- AH FELL!
AH WANT TO RUN-- BUT WHERE DO AH GO TO ESCAPE MYSELF?!
SO MANY THOUGHTS--CAN'T SORT 'EM OUT, DON'T KNOW WHICH ARE MINE, DON'T EVEN KNOW ANYMORE WHO AH REALLY AM!
OH!
NO!


THOSE BOYS-- STEVE AN' JOE, Jr.-- CAROL'S BROTHERS.
STEVE WAS KILLED IN VIETNAM.
THE GIRL-- CAROL HERSELF-- SHE'S RUNNING TOWARDS ME!



THE IMAGES AREN'T REAL, MERELY MEMORIES ROGUE SEES IN HER MIND'S-EYE, FEELS IN BOTH HEART AND SOUL...

... AS SHE RELIVES A LIFE THAT IS-- AND IS NOT-- HERS:

...THE HARD, DANGEROUS YEARS AS A SECRET AGENT, A YOUNG WOMAN'S PASSIONATE FIRST LOVE FOR HER MENTOR AND PARTNER, MICHAEL ROSSI...

... A TRANSFORMATION FROM HUMAN TO SOMETHING MUCH MORE...

... AS CAROL DANVERS BECOMES Ms. MARVEL.

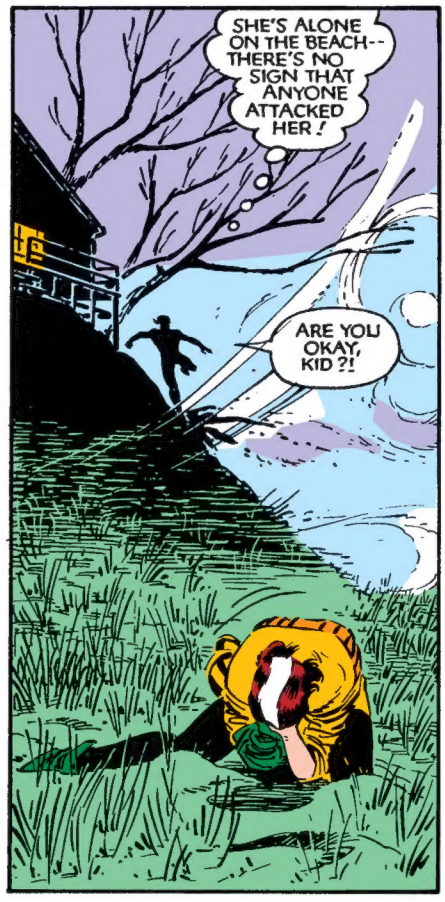
TRIUMPH, TRAGEDY, AN ATTEMPT TO BUILD A NEW AND HAPPIER LIFE IN SAN FRANCISCO...

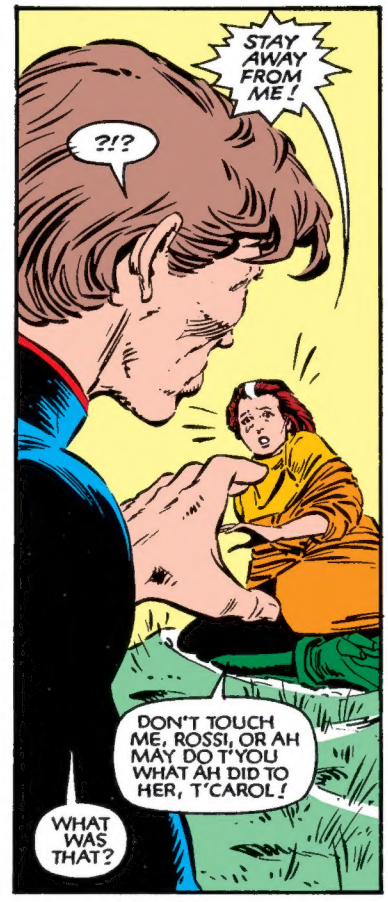
...SHATTERED ONE SUMMER'S NIGHT BY AN AMBUSH...

... A BATTLE TO THE DEATH...

...WITH QUARTER NEITHER ASKED NOR GIVEN.

ROGUE -- THAT'S HER SCREAMING!

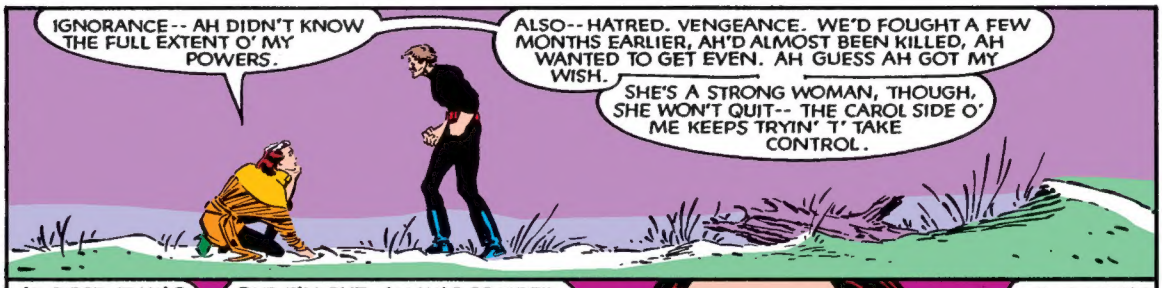

SHE'S ALONE ON THE BEACH-- THERE'S NO SIGN THAT ANYONE ATTACKED HER!
ARE YOU OKAY, KID?!

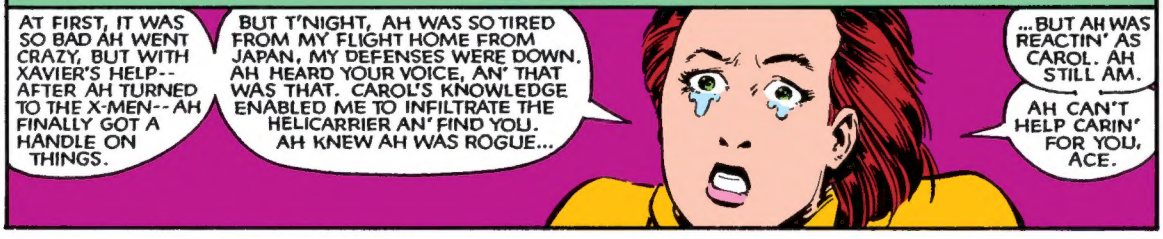

STAY AWAY FROM ME!
?!?
DON'T TOUCH ME, ROSSI, OR AH MAY DO T'YOU WHAT AH DID TO HER, T'CAROL!
WHAT WAS THAT?

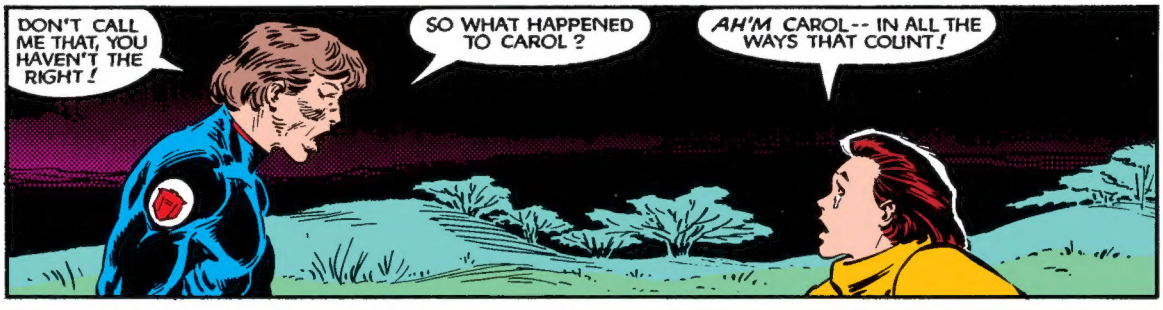
AH... AH STOLE HER LIFE...
...WHEN AH ABSORBED HER POWERS AN MEM'RIES, AH DESTROYED HER, AS SURELY AS IF AH'D PUT A BULLET THROUGH HER HEAD!
AN', IN THE PROCESS, AH MAY'VE DESTROYED MYSELF AS WELL.

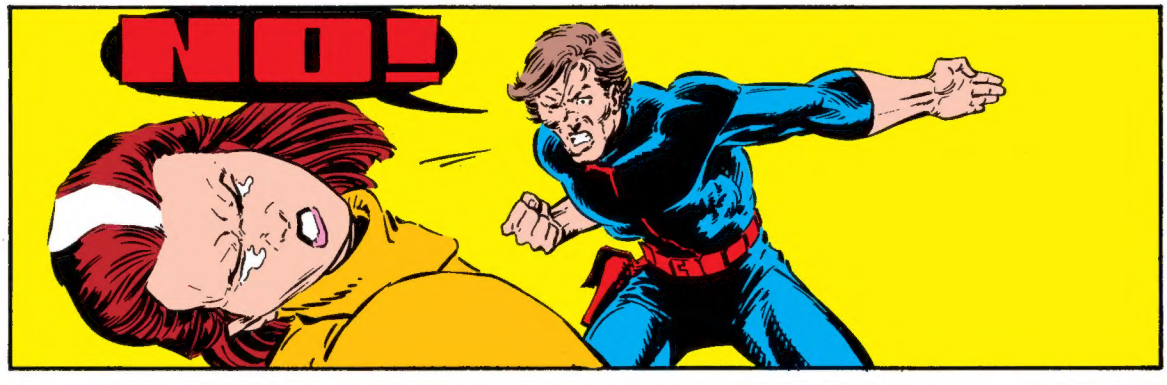
AH NEVER REALIZED HOW MUCH SHE LOST B'CAUSE OF ME. AH TOOK NOT JUST HER MEM'RIES, BUT THE EMOTIONS THAT WERE BOUND UP WITH 'EM -- ALL THE THINGS THAT GIVE LIFE AN' SELF MEANING!
NOW, WHEN SHE LOOKS AT YOU, OR HER FOLKS, SHE MAY KNOW WHO YOU ARE-- THANKS TO PROFESSOR XAVIER'S THERAPY... AN' HOW SHE SHOULD FEEL TOWARDS YOU...
... BUT AH'M THE ONE WHO FEELS THOSE EMOTIONS!

YOU WERE RIGHT, ROSSI, WE'VE NEVER MET-- BUT INSIDE ME ARE MEM'RIES OF WHEN YOU AN' CAROL WERE IN LOVE. THEY FOOL ME-- AH GET CONFUSED-- AH REACT AS IF THEY'RE MY MEM'RIES, MY EMOTIONS.
HOW COULD YOU HAVE DONE SUCH A THING?!
FOR PITY'S SAKE, WHY?!!


IGNORANCE -- AH DIDN'T KNOW THE FULL EXTENT O' MY POWERS.
ALSO -- HATRED. VENGEANCE. WE'D FOUGHT A FEW MONTHS EARLIER, AH'D ALMOST BEEN KILLED, AH WANTED TO GET EVEN. AH GUESS AH GOT MY WISH.
SHE'S A STRONG WOMAN, THOUGH, SHE WON'T QUIT -- THE CAROL SIDE O' ME KEEPS TRYIN' T' TAKE CONTROL.


AT FIRST, IT WAS SO BAD AH WENT CRAZY, BUT WITH XAVIER'S HELP -- AFTER AH TURNED TO THE X-MEN -- AH FINALLY GOT A HANDLE ON THINGS.
BUT T'NIGHT, AH WAS SO TIRED FROM MY FLIGHT HOME FROM JAPAN, MY DEFENSES WERE DOWN. AH HEARD YOUR VOICE, AN' THAT WAS THAT. CAROL'S KNOWLEDGE ENABLED ME TO INFILTRATE THE HELICARRIER AN' FIND YOU. AH KNEW AH WAS ROGUE...
...BUT AH WAS REACTIN' AS CAROL. AH STILL AM.
AH CAN'T HELP CARIN' FOR YOU, ACE.


DON'T CALL ME THAT, YOU HAVEN'T THE RIGHT!
SO WHAT HAPPENED TO CAROL?
AH'M CAROL -- IN ALL THE WAYS THAT COUNT!


NO!

AH'M SORRY! AH DIDN'T MEAN TO, ROSSI -- AH'M SORRY!
I DON'T BELIEVE YOU, ROGUE -- AND I DON'T CARE.
BEFORE GOD, I WISH THERE WAS SOME WAY TO MAKE YOU PAY FOR WHAT YOU'VE DONE.

I WISH I HAD THE POWER TO KILL YOU.
SO DO I, MY LOVE.
SO DO I.

EPILOGUE--

--COLONEL NICHOLAS FURY, DIRECTOR OF SHIELD, HAS RETURNED TO HIS HEADQUARTERS, IN ANSWER TO THEIR URGENT SUMMONS, ACCOMPANIED BY ONE OF HIS CHIEF AIDES, LA CONTESSA VALENTINA ALLEGRO de FONTAINE...

SHE SMASHED HER WAY INTO THE DETENTION AREA, COLONEL, TEARING THE ARMORED DOORS APART LIKE THEY WERE MADE OF PAPER!

SHE KILLED PRICE.

AND ESCAPED WITH THE PRISONER-- I TRIED TO STOP HER, SIR, I TRIED!

I UNDERSTAND, GARWOOD, I KNOW YOU DID YOUR BEST.

FORENSICS PUT TOGETHER THIS IDENTIKIT PORTRAIT OF THE WOMAN, BASED ON YOUR DESCRIPTION.

THAT'S HER, COLONEL, A PERFECT MATCH.

WE STILL HAVEN'T IDENTIFIED THE PRISONER...

... BUT HIS RESCUER IS *ROGUE*, ONE OF THE BROTHERHOOD OF EVIL MUTANTS--THOUGH LATELY, SHE'S BEEN AFFILIATED WITH THE *X-MEN*. HER POWER IS TO ABSORB THE MIND AND PHYSICAL ABILITIES OF WHOMEVER SHE TOUCHES.

STRANGE--PRICE WAS SHOT. WHY WOULD SOMEONE WITH ROGUE'S ASSETS STOOP TO USING A GUN? THAT DOESN'T MAKE SENSE.

I DON'T CARE IF SHE'S JOINED THE GIRL SCOUTS, VAL, I WON'T HAVE MY PEOPLE MURDERED.

OPERATIONS, THIS IS FURY.

ISSUE AN ALL-POINTS ALERT FOR ROGUE. BRING HER IN.

SHE'S TO BE CONSIDERED EXTREMELY DANGEROUS.

IF SHE RESISTS, I HEREBY AUTHORIZE THE USE OF *DEADLY FORCE*.

NEXT: HE'LL NEVER MAKE ME CRY!